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## THE ARENA.

### An Examination of the Testimony of the Evangelists.

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#### Part 4.

In the fourth place, as to the *conformity of their testimony with experience* The title of the evangelists to full credit for veracity would be readily conceded by the objector, if the facts they relate were such as ordinarily occur in human experience, and on this circumstance an argument is founded against their credibility. Miracles, say the objectors, are impossible; and therefore the evangelists were either deceivers or deceived; and in either case their narratives are unworthy of belief. Spinoza's argument against the possibility of miracles, was founded on the broad and bold assumption that all things are governed by immutable laws, or fixed modes of motion and relation, termed the laws of nature, by which God himself is of necessity bound. This erroneous assumption is the tortoise, on which stands the elephant which upholds his system of atheism. He does not inform us who made these immutable laws, nor whence they derive their binding force and irresistible operation. The argument supposes that the creator of all things first made a code of laws, and then put it out of his own power to change them. The scheme of Mr. Hume is but another form of the same error. He deduces the existence of such immutable laws from the uniform course of human experience. This, he affirms, is our guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact; and whatever is contrary to human experience, he

pronounces incredible. Without stopping to examine the correctness of this doctrine, as a fundamental principle in the laws of evidence, it is sufficient in this place to remark, that it contains this fallacy; it excludes all knowledge derived by inference or deduction from facts, confining us to what we derive from experience alone; and thus depriving us of any knowledge, or even rational belief, of the existence or character of God. Nay more, it goes to prove that successive generations of men can make no advancement in knowledge, but each must begin *de novo*, and be limited to the results of his own experience. But if we may infer, from what we see and know, that there is a Supreme Being, by whom this world was created, we may certainly, and with equal reason, believe him capable of works which we have never yet known him to perform. We may fairly conclude that the power which was originally put forth to create the world is still constantly and without ceasing exerted to sustain it; and that the experienced connection between cause and effect is but the uniform and constantly active operation of the finger of God. Whether this uniformity of operation extends to things beyond the limits of our observation, is a point we cannot certainly know. Its existence in all things that ordinarily concern us may be supposed to be ordained as conducive to our happiness; and if the belief in a revelation of

peace and mercy from God is conducive to the happiness of man, it is not irrational to suppose that he would depart from his ordinary course of action, in order to give it such attestations as should tend to secure that belief. "A miracle is improbable, when we can perceive no sufficient cause, in reference to his creatures, why the Deity should not vary his modes of operation; it ceases to be so, when such cause is assigned."

Mr. Hume's argument is thus refuted by Lord Brougham. "Here are two answers, to which the doctrine proposed by Mr. Hume is exposed, and either appears sufficient to shake it.

"First—Our belief in the uniformity of the laws of nature rests not altogether upon an experience. We believe no man ever was raised from the dead,—not merely because we ourselves never saw it, for indeed that would be a very limited ground of deduction; and our belief was fixed on the subject long before we had any considerable experience,—fixed chiefly by authority,—that is, by deference to other men's experience. We found our confident belief in this negative position partly, perhaps chiefly, upon the testimony of others; and at all events, our belief that in times before our own the same position held good, must of necessity be drawn from our trusting the relations of other men—that is, it depends upon the evidence of testimony. If, then, the existence of the law of nature is proved, in great part at least, by such evidence, can we wholly reject the like evidence when it comes to prove an exception to the rule—a deviation from the law? The more numerous are the cases of the law being kept—the more rare those of its being broken—the more scrupulous certainly ought we to be in admitting the proofs of the breach. But that testimony is capable of making good the proof there seems no doubt. In truth, the degree of excellence and strength to which testimony may arise seems almost indefinite. There is hardly any cogency which it is not capable by possible supposition of attaining. The endless multiplication of witnesses,—the unbounded variety of their habits of thinking, their prejudices, their interests,—affords the means of con-

ceiving the force of their testimony, augmented *ad infinitum*, because these circumstances afford the means of diminishing indefinitely the chances of their being all mistaken, all misled, or all combining to deceive us. Let any man try to calculate the chances of a thousand persons who come from different quarters, and never saw each other before, and who all vary in their habits, stations, opinions, interests,—being mistaken or combining to deceive us, when they give the same account of an event as having happened before their eyes,—these chances are many hundreds of thousands to one. And yet we can conceive them multiplied indefinitely; for one hundred thousand such witnesses may all in like manner bear the same testimony; and they may all tell us their story within twenty-four hours after the transaction, and in the next parish. And yet according to Mr. Hume's arument, we are bound to disbelieve them all, because they speak to a thing contrary to our own experience, and to the accounts which other witnesses had formerly given us of the laws of nature, and which our forefathers had handed down to us as derived from witnesses who lived in the old times before them. It is unnecessary to add that no testimony of the witnesses, whom we are supposing to concur in their relation, contradicts any testimony of our own senses. If it did, our disbelief would be at once warranted.

"Secondly—This leads us to the next objection to which Mr. Hume's argument is liable, and which we have in part anticipated while illustrating the first. He requires us to withhold our belief in circumstances which would force every man of common understanding to lend his assent, and to act upon the supposition of the story told being true. For, suppose either such numbers of various witnesses as we have spoken of; or, what is perhaps stronger, suppose a miracle reported to us, first by a number of relators, and then by three or four of the very soundest judges and most incorruptibly honest men we know,—men noted for their difficult belief of wonders, and, above all, steady unbelievers in miracles, without any bias in favor of religion, but rather accustomed to doubt, if not disbelieve,—most people would lend an easy be-

lief to any miracle thus vouched. But let us add this circumstance, that a friend on his death-bed had been attended by us, and that we had told him a fact known only to ourselves, something that we had secretly done the very moment before we told it to the dying man, and which to no other being we had ever revealed,—and that the credible witnesses we are supposing, informed us that the deceased appeared to them, conversed with them, and remained with them a day or two, accompanying them, and to avouch the fact of his re-appearance on this earth, communicated to them the secret of which we had made him the sole depository the moment before his death;—according to Mr. Hume, we are bound rather to believe, not only that those credible witnesses deceived us, or those sound and unprejudiced men were themselves deceived, and fancied things without real existence, but further, that they all hit by chance upon the discovery of a real secret, known only to ourselves and the dead man. Mr. Hume's argument requires us to believe this as the lesser improbability of the two—as less unlikely than the rising of one from the dead; and yet every one must feel convinced, that were he placed in the situation we have been figuring, he would not only lend his belief to the relation, but if the relators accompanied it with a special warning from the deceased person to avoid a certain contemplated act, he would, acting upon the belief of their story, take the warning, and avoid doing the forbidden deed. Mr. Hume's argument makes no exception. This is its scope; and whether he chooses to push it thus far or no, all miracles are of necessity denied by it, without the least regard to the kind or the quantity of the proof on which they are rested; and the testimony which we have supposed, accompanied by the test or check we have supposed, would fall within the grasp of the argument just as much and as clearly as any other miracle avouched by more ordinary combinations of evidence.

"The use of Mr. Hume's argument is this, and it is an important and a valuable one. It teaches us to sift closely and vigorously the evidence for miraculous events. It bids us remember that the probabilities

are always, and must always be incomparably greater against, than for, the truth of these relations, because it is always far more likely that the testimony should be mistaken or false, than that the general laws of nature should be suspended. Further than this the doctrine cannot in soundness of reason be carried. It does not go the length of proving that those general laws cannot, by the force of human testimony, be shown to have been, in a particular instance, and with a particular purpose, suspended." Discourse of Natural Theology, Note 5, pp. 210-214, ed. 1835.

38. But the full discussion of the subject of miracles forms no part of the present design. Their credibility has been fully established, and the objections of skeptics most satisfactorily met and overthrown, by the ablest writers of our own day, whose works are easily accessible. Thus much, however, may here be remarked; that in almost every miracle related by the evangelists, the facts, separately taken, were plain, intelligible, transpiring in public, and about which no person of ordinary observation would be likely to mistake. Persons blind or crippled, who applied to Jesus for relief, were known to have been crippled or blind for many years; they came to be cured; he spake to them; they went away whole. Lazarus had been dead and buried four days; Jesus called him to come forth from the grave; he immediately came forth, and was seen alive for a long time afterwards. In every case of healing, the previous condition of the sufferer was known to all; all saw his instantaneous restoration; and all witnessed the act of Jesus in touching him, and heard his words. All these separately considered, were facts, plain and simple in their nature, easily seen and fully comprehended by persons of common capacity and observation. If they were separately testified to, by different witnesses of ordinary intelligence and integrity, in any court of justice, the jury would be bound to believe them; and a verdict, rendered contrary to the uncontradicted testimony of credible witnesses to any of these plain facts, separately taken, would be liable to be set aside, as a verdict against evidence. If one credible witness testified to the fact, that Bartimeus

was blind, according to the uniform course of administering justice, this fact would be taken as satisfactorily proved. So also, if his subsequent restoration to sight were the sole fact in question, this also would be deemed established, by the like evidence. Nor would the rule of evidence be at all different, if the fact to be proved were the declaration of Jesus, immediately preceding his restoration to sight, that his faith had made him whole. In each of these cases, each isolated fact was capable of being accurately observed, and certainly known; and the evidence demands our assent, precisely as the like evidence upon any other indifferent subject. The connection of the word or the act of Jesus with the restora-

#### WHAT CHRISTIANITY HAS DONE.

Some gentlemen tell us very complacently that they have no need of religion; they can get along well enough without it. Let us tell you, my friends, the worst kind of religion is no religion at all. And these men who live in ease and luxury, indulging themselves in the amusement of going without religion, may be thankful that they live in lands where the Gospel they neglected has tamed the beastliness and ferocity of the men who, but for Christianity, might long ago have eaten their bodies like the South Sea Islanders, or cut off their heads like the monsters of the French Revolution.

When the microscopic search of skepticism, which has hunted the heavens and sounded the seas to disprove the existence of a Creator, has turned its attention to human society, and has found a place on this planet ten miles square where a decent man can live in decency, comfort and security, supporting and educating his children unspoiled and unpolluted; a place where age is revered, infancy respected, womanhood honored, and human life held in due regard—when the skeptic can find such a place on this globe where the Gospel of Christ has not gone and cleared the way, and laid the foundations and made decency and security possible, it will then be in order for the skeptical literati to move thither, and there ventilate their views.

tion of the blind, lame and dead, to sight, and health, and life, as cause and effect, is a conclusion which our reason is compelled to admit, from the uniformity of their concurrence, in such a multitude of instances, as well as from the universal conviction of all, whether friends or foes, who beheld the miracles which he wrought. Indeed, if the truth of one of the miracles is satisfactorily established, our belief cannot reasonably be withheld from them all. This is the issue proposed by Dr. Paley, in regard to the evidence of the death of Jesus upon the cross, and his subsequent resurrection, the truth of which he has established in an argument incapable of refutation.

But so long as these men are dependent upon religion which they discard for every privilege they enjoy, they may well hesitate a little before they seek to rob the Christian of his hope and humanity of its faith in that Saviour who alone has given to man that hope of eternal life which makes life tolerable and society possible, and robs death of its terrors and the grave of its gloom.

—James Russell Lowell.

#### A REBUKE.

Fifty years ago David Lipscomb was riding along the road with an infidel doctor, talking on the Bible. The doctor asked: "Can you tell me one good thing the Christian religion has given to the world?" Lipscomb replied: "It has given us better hogs and better horses, and better cattle, and better farms, and better society, and better civilization. No country without the Bible has ever had a mail system, a telegraph system, a bank, or even a two-horse wagon—till the Bible got there. No infidel can be persuaded to live in a country that has no Bible.—*Burnett's Budget*.

Thomas Dick: "The religion of the Bible requires only to be examined with care, and studied with humility and reverence in order to produce a full conviction of its celestial origin."

Professor O. M. Mitchell: "The most wonderful volume in existence is, beyond doubt, the Bible."

# David Hume's Essay on Miracles

## Is It a Composite or a Forgery?

BY THE EDITOR.

Prof. A. C. M'Giffert of Union Theological Seminary, New York, in his work, "Protestant Thought Before Kant," page 221, says:

Hume was really concerned primarily to destroy the apologetic value of miracles, and for that purpose his argument was valid, and has never been successfully refuted."

This statement led to a careful study of the *Essay of Hume*. The remarkable discovery was made that in this "unrefuted" argument against miracles is found these words, "Scripture and tradition . . . . When they are considered merely as external evidence, and not brought home to every one's breast, by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit." The operation of the Holy Spirit which brings the truth "home to every human breast," is the most universal miracle of the Christian era. Could it be possible that this essay is a composite document as we are so persistently assured by the critics the books of Scriptures are?

We determined to examine it by the "higher critical method." The processes of the critics are not at all complicated and a little practice enabled us to make several discoveries of very extraordinary interest. The essay was so ingeniously constructed that if its negatives were made positives, and its positives, negatives, the argument supported, instead of confuted miracles. Coupling these discoveries with the first, concerning the Holy Spirit, suggested the probability that the author had originally attempted to maintain the miraculous and another hand by later additions had defeated his purpose. This impression was strengthened by the further discovery that the essay was in two parts. The first was complete and concluded the argument. The second part shifted the argument from disproving miracles, to disproving miracles as possessing *apologetic value*, which is quite a different issue. A further discovery was

made; Part one specifically declares, "No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle," Part two declares, "I own that there may be miracles which may admit proof from human testimony."

We decided to omit Part two as matter added by a later hand for the following reasons:

Hume was too accomplished a rhetorician to make use of an anti-climax; he was too skilled a dialectician to disprove at the end of his essay, the fundamental principle which he established in the beginning. In addition there is such a marked difference between the two parts as to make it certain that they could not have been produced by the same mind.

Part one is a closely reasoned, logical argument, proceeding directly to the establishment of the avowed principle. There are no illustrations save two, which are so like the many to be found in Part two, as evidently to be the product of the same hand. We have omitted them. There is not a single word of crimination, innuendo or reviling relating to those whom he deems antagonists.

The writer of Part two suddenly drops from this high plane to the level of the demagogue, who appeals to the groundlings, with whom an anecdote is weightier than an argument. He descends to coarse satire, wild mis-statement and deliberate misrepresentation. A few instances will suffice.

"We readily reject any fact which is unusual and incredible in an ordinary degree; but when anything is affirmed utterly absurd and miraculous, we more readily admit such fact upon account of that very circumstance which ought to destroy all its authority." Page 132.

"If the spirit of religion join itself to the love of wonder, there is an end of common-sense; and human testimony loses all pretensions to authority." Page 132.

"A religionist may be an enthusiast and imagine he sees what has no reality. He

may know his narrative to be false, and yet persevere in it with the best intentions in the world, for the sake of promoting so holy a cause; his auditors may not have, and commonly have not, sufficient judgment to canvass his evidences; what judgment they have, they renounce by principle in these sublime and mysterious subjects. Their credulity increases his impudence and his impudence overpowers their credulity." Page 133.

"Though the Being, to whom the miracle is ascribed be the Almighty, it does not upon that account become a whit more probable." Page 145.

"Our most holy faith is founded on Faith, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it, to put it to such trial as it is by no means fitted to endure." Page 146.

Two-thirds of Part two is devoted to repeating and discussing unusual incidents from various books as if seeking parallels for the Bible miracles.

As an illustration he gives a characterization of the Pentateuch which reads as if it might be a quotation from an infidel writer of his time.

"We may conclude, that the Christian religion not only was at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity; and, whoever is moved by faith to assent to it, is conscious of a continued miracle in his own person, which subverts all the principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience."

The addition of Part two is unquestionably the work of a bungler. The most ordinary justice to Hume would forbid the suggestion that he had the slightest relation whatever with the matter. He would certainly resent the assertion that, in the discussion of a sacred and supreme question like this, he could descend to such arrant demagoguery.

We have used in our study the edition of 1793. Hume died in 1776. Although a legacy of \$1,000 was left for the publication of "Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion," they were not issued until several

years after his death and then by the agency of his nephew. Our edition of 1793 contains the "Dialogues."

We decided to "distinguish and to separate the older record from the later variant account which blurred and concealed the original argument.\* Assuming that the reference to the "operation of the Holy Spirit" was the key, we proceeded to "separate" the true essay from the false by following the method of restoring a palimpsest, by erasing the words which had been super-inscribed. We have been governed by the context as far as possible in filling the vacancies thus created. There has been no attempt to deceive by imitating the style or even the language of the rest of the essay. The object being only to restore the original meaning, while at the same time avoiding the "higher critical tendency" to emphasize and exaggerate the discrepancies and contradictions they were able to create.

Prof M'Giffert is in error when he says: "Hume's argument has never been successfully refuted." The refutations were so numerous at the time, by scholars of the highest ability and most profound learning, and of such an overwhelming character, that for many years Hume's Essay has been but a forgotten fantasy of a great man whose learning of the kind had made him mad. Prof. M'Giffert's advertisement may be a prospectus of a coming revival. The Modern Mind which has done so extensive a business upon the small capital inherited from Celsus, Julian, Porphyry, Astruc and a few other dead Anaks, may desire a little variety. It is quite possible that Hume's argument may be resurrected and added to their collection of Ancient Fables. It is also quite probable, if this should occur, that under the guise of 20th century scholarship it may be exploited as an original truth hot from the brain of some prophet yet to be. Desirous of helping every good work, we have contributed our mite in this latest version of Hume's Essay on Miracles.

Prof. M'Giffert is also in error in saying: (page 211):

"That it cannot be historically proved

\* Preface to Kent's *Life and Teaching of Jesus*.

that any particular event was wrought by a supernatural power with the purpose of testifying to a person's divine commission, is a commonplace among historians to-day."

So far as it has yet appeared to the world, neither the Professor nor any historian whom he may have in mind, has proven his right to declare "the purpose" of the One who has "wrought the supernatural event." "Distinguishing" might possibly be applied to human writings but will hardly suffice to reveal divine purposes. We wonder why such a foolish remark should ever be made by an intelligent, educated man. No one is deceived by it but the ignorant. When uttered to the well informed, the reply is a stare of wonder, a smile of pity, or a shrug of contempt. When uttered to another critic of the same school, if in company with others, it is received with a wink; if alone, with laughter and applause.

What is really meant by 'historian,' is the man who scornfully repudiates God's History as being a collection of myths, legends and fables; but, who modestly declares "My history IS HISTORY!" From Moses to the last Apostle who faced savage beasts or the fagot and axe of pagan persecutors, the chief purpose declared in the Scriptures is that of testifying to the divine commission of the person by whom the supernatural event is wrought. But the Bible, the only History dealing with miracles is barred as history by the Professor! Our only reply is, as the mood may be, a stare, a smile or a shrug.

Prof. G. Frederick Wright, LL.D., editor of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, in "The Logic of Christian Evidences," says:

"It is in miracles, and so far as we can see, it is in miracles chiefly, if not only, that a supernatural dispensation can subject itself to the verification which the reason properly demands before accepting it."

Judge Francis J. Lamb, author of "Miracle and Science," in "Miracle and the Christian Religion," says:

"The Bible records some two hundred miracles, and more than half are miracles wrought as testimony of God, to sanction and verify God's messages and agents sent by him."

The courts of the civilized world under the Jural Rule of the Ancient Document

have decided the Bible to be genuine and authentic. Its books are a testimony; their contents are a deposition. It is just as easy and profitable to contravene Bible History as that of the Magna Charta of the Declaration of Independence. No man in his right mind would attempt either.

It has become sickeningly disgusting to have the Counterfeit Critics loftily declare that all the scholarship of the world is against the historical interpretation of the Bible. It is the result of a wisdom akin to that of the country bumpkin who walked from his country home for the first time, a dozen miles or so, to the county-seat. When he returned he said, "if the world is as big the other way as it is this, it must be a mighty big place." We are willing to take the responsibility of offering to match *scholars*, with Prof. M'Giffert, ten to one, measured by any standard, we care not what. Merely as a starter we submitted Prof. M'Giffert's assertions to a scholar and theologian who stands among the leaders on either side of the sea. He permits us to add to our paper the following paragraphs:

"Professor M'Giffert speaks as one having authority, so do I. If he complacently puts forth his opinion that Hume's argument against the 'apologetic value of miracles, . . . . has never been successfully refuted,' with equal complacency, I say, *it has been refuted*. My opinion is worth just as much to me, as his is to him. Now he must submit his veracity and judgment with mine to some other jury, than either or both of us, for the evidential value of our statements. I will trust mine against his; *ego* against *ego*, and wait the decision of any twelve honest men, impartial as men can be found.

"I would be willing to select any one of a score of answers, upon which to decide the balance of opinion. I need not, however, suggest any other name than that of Archbishop Whately. But if question be raised as to his making answer to Hume's argument the 'apologetic value,' then I will say, that by the answer of a hundred others; '*Miracula sine doctrina nihil valent*,' is the principle which will settle it. The character of Jesus Christ and the moral element of the miracle-working, an-

swers Hume irrefutably. Take the one miracle upon which all others hinge, both now and in the faith of the disciples, the Resurrection of Jesus. If He really rose from the dead, then He is lifted out of the realm of the merely human abilities. It was He who spoke the Sermon on the Mount; who rose from the dead.

"The Miracles of Jesus rest upon 'a great religious assumption; 'Wherefore should be thought a thing incredible that God, . .' There is nothing irrational or unscientific in the assumption of the *possibility* of miracles. Intelligent skeptics say this. Here, then we begin. Mozley was therefore right when he said, 'A miracle is on one side of it, not a fact of this world, but of the invisible world.' When Hume puts all evidence upon sensuous testimony, he *begs the question*. He discredits 'faith' with what

he calls 'reason.' If our senses or some combination of them are responsible for all we know, we know very little, and Hume and M'Giffert upon that plane are both out-classed by all the great scholars, likewise all the common people. What is Hume's argument worth at any rate? He confessed to the Bishop of Durham, that he had never carefully read the New Testament. Prof. M'Giffert is likewise out of date in selecting Hume for his support. Why did he not select Matthew Arnold.

"It is too late for Prof. M'Giffert, Hume or even Arnold to destroy the two hundred or so of miracles which have been evidenced now during all these hundreds of years by not only the Supernatural Man and the Supernatural Book, but the invincible testimony of the Supernatural Church."

## Hume's Original Argument for Miracles

"Distinguished" by Higher Critical Intuition.

The evidence of the truth of the *Christian* religion is greater than the evidence for the truth of our senses; because even in the first authors of our religion, it was as great; and it is evident it must increase in passing from them to their disciples from the cumulative experience. We can, therefore, rest greater confidence in their testimony than in the original immediate object of their senses. A stronger evidence can never be destroyed by a weaker; therefore, were the doctrine of miracles, not so clearly revealed in Scripture, it were directly contrary to the rules of just reasoning to refuse to give our assent to it. It does not contradict sense, because both Scripture and tradition, on which it is supposed to be built, carry greater evidence with them than sense, even when they are considered as external evidences; how much more so when brought home to every one's breast, by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit.

Nothing is so convenient as a decisive argument of this kind, which must at least silence the most arrogant infidelity and unbelief and free us from their impertinent assaults. I flatter myself that I have discovered an argument of like nature, which,

if just, will with all Christians be an everlasting check to all kinds of fantastic theories and consequently, will be useful as long as the world endures. For so long, I presume, will the attacks upon scriptural miracles be found in history.

Should experience be our only guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact, it must be acknowledged, that this guide is not altogether infallible, but in many cases is apt to lead us into errors. One, who in our climate, should expect better weather in any week in June, than in one of December, would reason justly, and conformably to experience; but it is certain, that he may happen, in the event, to find himself mistaken. However, we may observe, that in such a case, he would have no cause to complain of experience; because it commonly informs us beforehand of the uncertainty by that contrariety of events which we may learn from a diligent observation. All effects follow not with like certainty from their supposed causes. Some events are found in all countries and ages, to have been constantly conjoined together; others are found to have been more variable, and sometimes to disappoint our expectations; so that, in our reasonings con-

cerning matters of fact, there are all imaginable degrees of assurance from the highest certainty to the lowest species of moral evidence.

A wise man, therefore, proportions his belief to the evidence. In such conclusions as are founded on the infallible experience, he expects the event with the last degree of assurance and regards his past experience and the like experience of others as a *full proof* of the future existence of that event. In other cases, he proceeds with caution; he weighs the opposite experiments; he considers which side is supported by the greater number of experiments; to that side, he inclines, with doubt and hesitation; and when at last he fixes his judgment, the evidence exceeds not what we properly called *probability*. All probability, then, supposes an opposition of experiments and observations, where the one side is found to over-balance the other, and to produce a degree of evidence, proportioned to the superiority. If a hundred witnesses testify to instances or experiments on one side, and fifty, equally competent and well-informed on another, we are afforded a doubtful expectation of any event. If a hundred witnesses testify to uniform experiences with only one that is contradictory, we reasonably receive a strong degree of assurance. However there may be a possible condition of things which would make the testimony of the one out-weigh that of the hundred; if he were present, if he could see, if he could hear; while the hundred were absent, or if they were blind or deaf. In all cases, we must balance the opposite experiments, wherethey are opposite, and deduct the force of the smaller number from that of the greater, in order to know the exact force of the superior evidence.

To apply these principles to a particular instance we observe, that there is no species of reasoning more common, more useful, and even necessary to human life, than that which is derived from the testimony of men, and the reports of eye-witnesses and spectators. This species of reasoning, perhaps, one may deny to be founded on the relations of cause and effect. I shall not dispute about a word. It will be sufficient to observe, that our assurance in any

argument of this kind is derived from no other principle than the observation of the veracity of human testimony by ourselves and others, and of the usual conformity of facts to the report of witnesses. It should not be regarded as a general maxim, that no objects have any discoverable connection together, and that all the inferences which we draw from one to another, are founded merely on our experience of their constant and regular conjunction; our experience is extremely limited when compared with that of all who have shared with us the knowledge derived from their experience. The memory is tenacious to a remarkable degree; men commonly possess an inclination to truth and a principle of probity; they are sensible to shame, when detected in a falsehood; these, we have discovered by experience as well as from the testimony of others are qualities inherent in human nature. When our experience is corroborated by the universal experience of all men, we repose confidence in human testimony. A man who is delirious, or who is noted for falsehood and villainy, has no manner of authority with us. We accept character for honor and truthfulness when conjoined to personal knowledge of the facts maintained by the evidence, as a guarantee that the testimony may be regarded as of equal if not superior competence to our own limited experience.

Evidence derived from witnesses is founded on their past experience enlightened by the knowledge derived from all other past experiences. It is to be regarded as a *proof*, or a *probability*, according as the conjunction between the particular kind of report and the kind of object has been found to be constant or variable. There are a number of circumstances to be taken into consideration in all judgments of this kind; and the ultimate standard by which we determine all disputes that may arise concerning them, is always derived from our own experience and observation and the general knowledge derived from the experience and observation of others. Where this experience is not entirely uniform on any side, it is attended with an unavoidable contrariety in our judgments and with the same opposition and mutual destruction of argument as in every other kind

of evidence. We frequently hesitate concerning the report of others. We balance the opposite circumstances, which cause any doubt or uncertainty; and when we discover a superiority on any side, we incline to it; but still in diminution of assurance in proportion to the force of its antagonist.

This contrariety of evidence in the present case, may be derived from several different causes; from the opposition of contrary testimony; from the character or number of the witnesses; from the manner of their delivering their testimony; or from the union of all these circumstances. We entertain a suspicion concerning any matter of fact when the witnesses contradict each other; when they are but few, or of a doubtful character; when they have an interest in what they affirm; when they deliver their testimony with hesitation, or on the contrary, with too violent asservation. On the other hand, we are constrained to accept evidence as truthful when the witnesses do not contradict each other; when they are of irreproachable character; when they have no interest in what they affirm, but they rather suffer great loss or endure severe hurt as the result of affirming as they do; when they deliver their testimony without boldness or hesitation, but frankly as men talk to their friends.

Suppose, for instance, that the fact, which the testimony endeavors to establish, partakes of the extraordinary and the marvellous; in that case, evidence resulting from the testimony of honorable, truthful and competent witnesses should suffer no diminution of force because of the marvellous character of the fact attested. When the fact is such a one as has seldom fallen under our observation, here is a contest of two opposite experiences, of which the one destroys the other, as far as its force goes; and the superior can only operate on the mind by the force which remains. The very same principle of experience, which gave us a certain degree of assurance in the testimony of witnesses, gives us also, in this case, another degree of assurance against the fact which they endeavor to establish; from which contradiction there necessarily arises a counterpoise and mutual destruction of belief and authority, unless the character, the competence and dis-

interestedness of the witnesses give us assurance that their testimony is truthful.

In order to increase the probability against the testimony of witnesses, let us suppose, that the fact, which they affirm, instead of being only marvellous, is really miraculous; and suppose also, that the testimony, considered apart and in itself, amounts to an entire proof; in that case there is proof against proof, of which the strongest must prevail, but still with a diminution of its force, in proportion to that of its antagonist.

A miracle is a variation of the laws of nature, which apparently transcends the power of ordinary natural agencies. The proof for a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, cannot be derived from our experience, but only from the testimony of competent, truthful persons who were eyewitnesses, who have not been deceived, but tell the truth according to their experience and observation.

We may infer, because from our experience that iron cannot of itself remain suspended in the air or float in the water; or that fire consumes wood and is extinguished by water; that these events are found agreeable to the laws of nature and there must be required a violation of these laws, or as the skeptic might say, a miracle, to prevent them. The experience of others in every way as competent, as honest, as truthful as ourselves may differ from ours. Nothing in violation of any law of nature may be necessary to produce either of the occurrences suggested. It may be that these may be the results of some higher law of nature of which we are ignorant. Iron may float in air or on water; wood may be so prepared that fire will not burn it; fire may be produced by such elements that water, instead of extinguishing it, may only scatter and increase it. No individual may ever be able to claim truthfully that he is familiar with all of the laws of nature and therefore competent to decide whether or not an act is a violation or a variation of law. It is a miracle that a dead man should come to life. It has never been observed but a very few times and then only as the result of the intervention of a superhuman power. It is therefore beyond the experience of all of the race but a very few; their testimony, if they are holy

men, competent, disinterested, and eyewitnesses, is sufficient to over-balance the testimony of a world full of men who were absent and in total ignorance of the event.

It is therefore not an error to declare that "No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavors to establish. When any one tells me, that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself, whether it be more probable, that the person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact which he relates should have happened. I weigh the one observation against the other; and according to the superiority which I discover, I pronounce my decision.

I would assuredly reject the miracle unless the falsehood of the testimony of the witness would be more miraculous, than the event which they relate. I find that the witnesses, as we have stated above, do not contradict each other; they are holy men of spotless and irreproachable life and character; they have no interest in what they affirm; they have suffered irreparable loss because of their testimony; most of them loss of life.

It is impossible to withhold acceptance of their testimony as truthful without ourselves being untruthful. We are compelled by the overwhelming force of their evidence to declare that miracles *may* happen, because they *have* happened.

## The Bible Surpasses All Other Books.

"Paganism is the work of man. One can here read imbecility. What do these gods, so boastful, know more than other mortals; these legislators, Greek or Roman; this Numa, this Lycurgus; these priests of India, or of Memphis; this Confucius; this Mohammed?—absolutely nothing. They have made a perfect chaos of morals. There is not one among them all who has said anything new in reference to our future destiny, to the soul, to the essence of God, to the creation. Enter the sanctuaries of paganism, you there find perfect chaos, a thousand contradictions, war between the gods, impurity and abomination adored, all sorts of corruption festering in the thick shades, with the rotten wood, the idol and the priest. Does this honor God, or does it dishonor Him? Are these religions and these gods to be compared with Christianity?"

"Truth should embrace the universe. Such is Christianity—the only religion which destroys sectional prejudices; the only one which proclaims the unity and the absolute brotherhood of the whole human family; the only one which is purely spiritual; in fine, the only one which assigns to all, without distinction, for a true country, the bosom of the Creator, God. Christ proved that He was the Son

of the Eternal by His disregard of time. All His doctrines signify only and the same thing—eternity."

"The Gospel is more than a book; it is a living being, with an action, a power, which invades everything that opposes its extension. Behold! it is upon this table—this book (the Bible) surpassing all other; I never omit to read it, and every day with new pleasure. Nowhere is to be found such a series of beautiful ideas, —admirable moral maxims, which pass before us like the battalions of a celestial army, and which produce in our soul the same emotions which one experiences in contemplating the infinite expanse of the skies, resplendent in a summer's night with all the brilliance of the stars. Not only is our mind absorbed; it is controlled; and the soul can never go astray with this book for its guide."

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

Jean Paul Richer: "The first leaf of the Mosaic record has more weight than all the folios of men and philosophy."

James D. Dean: "The grand old Book of God still stands, and this old earth, the more its leaves are turned over and pondered, the more it will sustain and illustrate the sacred Word."

## Resurrection of Lazarus.\*

JUDGE FRANCIS J. LAMB.

We offer in evidence the Gospel of John as an Ancient Document, especially parts thereof relevant to the "issue," viz., as particular, subsidiary, evidentiary *facts*, and cite the verse or verses in which the *fact* is recorded.

### FACTS.

Lazarus was a man residing at Bethany, a village situated about fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem. (John xi. 18.)

Mary and Martha were sisters of Lazarus, and the three were beloved by Jesus. (John xi. 5, 21, 32.)

Lazarus was sick, and his malady became so serious that his sisters became alarmed. Evidently hoping that Jesus would cure Lazarus, the sisters sent a message to Jesus, who was absent. (John xi. 3, 21, 23.)

Jesus received the message, and, after receiving it, stayed two days in the place where he received it; during which time Lazarus died. (John xi. 6.)

Jesus then informed the disciples that accompanied him that Lazarus was dead. (John xi. 14.)

Jesus announced to his disciples his determination to return again to Judæa, where the home of Lazarus had been. (John xi. 7, 15.)

Jesus and his disciples returned to Bethany, and found that the dead body of Lazarus had been buried and lain in the tomb four days. (John xi. 17.)

When Jesus arrived at Bethany he found many of the Jews attendant at the home of Mary and Martha, met to mourn with the sisters over the death of Lazarus. (John xi. 19, 31.)

The sisters, Mary and Martha, each met Jesus on his arrival at Bethany, and each said to Jesus, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." (John xi. 21, 32.)

Jesus told Martha that Lazarus should rise again from death, which Martha said she believed would occur "in the resurrection at the last day." (John xi. 23, 24.)

The grief of Mary over the death of Lazarus, and that of the Jews also weeping with her, was manifested with such intensity that Jesus, sympathizing, wept also. (John xi. 35.)

At Jesus' request, Mary and Martha and the friends in their company conducted Jesus and his disciples to the tomb, in which lay the dead body of Lazarus. "It was a cave, and a stone lay against it." (John xi. 38, Am. Rev.)

The document shows that, besides Jesus and his disciples and Mary and Martha, there was a considerable concourse of Jews met to sympathize with Mary and Martha over the death of Lazarus. (John xi. 19.)

In the presence of this considerable assembly, immediately at the door of the tomb in which the dead body of Lazarus lay enshrouded in grave-clothes, Jesus ordered the stone to be taken away. "Martha, the sister of him that was dead," protested against opening the tomb. She said to Jesus, "Lord, by this time the body decayeth; for he hath been dead four days." (John xi. 39, Am. Rev.)

In obedience, however, to Jesus' command, those present removed the stone from the door of the tomb. (John xi. 41.)

Then, after brief prayer, Jesus at the door of the tomb spoke with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." Immediately "he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin," and Jesus said, "Loose him, and let him go." (John xi. 43, 44.)

Between one and two months later Jesus came again to Bethany, "where Lazarus was whom Jesus raised from the dead," and a feast was spread for Jesus, and "Lazarus was one of them that sat at meat." (John xii. 1, 2.)

At that time "the common people therefore of the Jews learned that he was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead." (John xii. 9, Am. Rev.)

\* *Miracle and Science.*

The chief priests, hostile to Jesus, when informed of the raising of Lazarus from death, took counsel to put Lazarus to death, because many Jews were led to believe on Jesus by reason of his raising Lazarus from death. (John xii. 10, 11.)

A few days later, when the Lord made triumphant entry into Jerusalem and the attention of the vast assembly of people at the great feast had been called to the fact of raising Lazarus from death, "the multitude that was with him (Jesus) when he called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from the dead, bare witness"; that is, that multitude that was present when Lazarus was raised from death, testified to the verity of the miracle to the people gathered at Jerusalem. (John xii. 17.)

"For this cause also the multitude went and met him, for that they heard that he had done this sign." (John xii. 18.)

All these separate items, evidentiary facts, are ordinary testimony. Mary and Martha were perfectly competent witnesses to know and to testify to the sickness, death, and burial of Lazarus, and that he had been dead and buried four days before Jesus had the tomb opened. The neighbors of Mary and Martha were also competent witnesses to know and testify to the death and sepulture of Lazarus. All of them, and John who wrote the document, were competent to observe and testify to the transactions detailed that took place at the tomb when Lazarus came forth from it alive, and that he continued alive.

Each and all the items of evidence are of matters plain and simple in their nature, easily seen, and capable of being readily and accurately observed, scrutinized, comprehended, and detailed in testimony by witnesses who are of ordinary capacity and observation. The amount of competent evidence is abundant, unimpeached, and uncontradicted.

#### RESULT OF TRIAL.

The evidence would require, at the hands of a jury, a verdict embodying these facts: (1) That Lazarus was dead; (2) that Jesus spoke over the dead body of Lazarus the words, "Lazarus, come forth," and immediately Lazarus' dead body was alive; and

(3) that Lazarus came forth from the tomb alive, and continued alive.

A juror would violate his oath if he refused to find such a verdict on that evidence. A contrary verdict would be set aside by a court as not only contrary to the evidence, but perverse. In short the miracle is proved by competent evidence.

The fact that Lazarus was dead and at the fiat words of Jesus he was immediately alive and continued alive, establishes the transaction a miracle as tested by any standard definition; and the proof is by human testimony.

Nay, the facts proved constitute the transaction a miracle, tested even by Mr. Hume's own definition embraced in his proposition here in issue, i. e., "A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature." The word "violation" so used seems plainly polemic, but cannot rationally mean other than that a miracle thwarts or frustrates the operation of the laws of nature.

It is undoubtedly a law of nature that the dead body of a man remain dead. It at once commences to decompose, continues to decompose, and returns to dust. But Lazarus' dead body did not remain dead, did not return to dust, but became alive and continued alive. These facts, thwarting, frustrating, the operation of the laws of nature, were clearly and abundantly proved by a multitude of competent witnesses—by human testimony. Tested even by Mr. Hume's own definition, the transaction was proved a miracle, and is proved a verity, and the proof is by human testimony.

This review of the law and evidence on the "issue" tried justifies the conclusion that the miracles of the Bible are capable of being proved, and are proved, by existing available evidence—evidence competent, proper, admissible under the rules and standards of the science of jurisprudence as administered in courts of justice of enlightened nations of the earth; also the miracles of the Bible are verities tested by the same standards by which fact and truth are established on all questions between man and man in which fact and truth depend on and are ascertained and are established through evidence.

# Is There a Place of Punishment Called Hell?

PROFESSOR L. T. TOWNSEND, LL.D.

## Fifth Paper.

### *Human Conditions.*

That there are differences of opinion as to the goodness and badness of things no one familiar with literature can doubt. Dr. Elliot, for instance, while commanding his type of religion, says:

"It (Unitarian Religion) sees goodness in the moral history of the human race that a loving God rules the universe."

Voltaire's response, though made nearly two hundred years earlier, is this:

"A singular notion of universal good composed of the stone, of the gout, of all crimes, of all sufferings, of death, and daily damnation!"

Since there are those who take Voltaire's word for almost anything we quote still further:

"Who can without horror consider the whole earth as the empire of destruction. It abounds in wonders; it abounds also in victims. It is a vast field of carnage and contagion. Every species is without pity pursued and torn in pieces throughout the earth and air and water. In man there is more wretchedness than in all other animals put together; he smarts continually under two scourges, which other animals never feel—anxiety and indifference. He loves life and yet he knows he must die. If he enjoys some transient good for which he is thankful to heaven, he suffers various evils and is at last devoured by worms. This knowledge every moment is rankling and corroding in his bosom. Yet he spends the transient moments of his existence in diffusing the misery that he himself suffers, in cutting the throat of his fellow creatures, cheating and being cheated, robbing and being robbed, in serving that he may command and in repenting of all that he does. The bulk of mankind are nothing more than a crowd of wretches who are equally criminal and unfortunate, and the globe contains carcasses rather than men. I tremble upon a review of this dreadful picture, to find that it implies a complaint against Providence, and I wish I never had been born."

Pessimism, do you say? Yes, that of a pronounced type, but speak against it all one may, there are many stubborn facts that very well back up Voltairne's complaint.

In the parable of the Pounds, our Lord took to task the unfaithful servant who had offered this complaint, "I feared thee because thou art an austere man." This was the reply to the servant, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest I was an austere man, taking up what I laid not down and reaping that I did not sow; therefore,"—then he was told what he should have done and there were taken from him the talents with which he had been entrusted. (Luke xix. 21, 22.)

It has occurred to all men who think that if some kind-hearted man had had the creating and ordering of the natural world it would have been very different from what we find it. It would have been such that hunger and thirst would be unknown; that plants needful for human sustenance would grow without cultivation as weeds do now; that insect life would contribute to human happiness instead of destroying the fruits of industry and adding to the sicknesses and miseries of human life. And many other changes that one can imagine would have been secured. Physiologists know that Comte was right, when insisting that "the organs of the body—the eye, the stomach, the liver, the brain—might have been so constructed as not to be liable to disease and pain to which they are now exposed, not by accident, but by their very nature and structure.

More than one thoughtful man has whispered to himself:

"God forgive me! but I've thought  
A thousand times that if I had His power  
Or he my love, we'd have a different world  
From this we live in."

But here is the world and we are in it, nor are we sure, judging from the nature of things, that we should be any better off if we were out of it. What, therefore, we again ask, would better be done? Shall men storm and rage against the order of things, or properly behave themselves?

Nothing is more rational than these admonitions of Horace Mann:

"For the Book of Life there is a Book of Death. Every nerve that can thrill with pleasure can also agonize with pain. Instead of hymnings of bliss there may be howlings of despair. If there is an infinity of truth, there is an infinity of error also; and the empyrean of possible blessedness is not more high than the abysses of possible woe are deep . . . . Endued then with these immortal and energetic capacities to soar or sink; with these heights of glory above him, and this abyss of wretchedness below him; whitherward shall a young man set his face, and how shall he order his steps?"

Dr. Edward Beecher, when preparing his work entitled *Conflict of Ages*, and while contemplating existing evils, paused, sprang to his feet, paced the floor, confronted with this terrible question: "What if, after all, God is not good?" We at first wonder at the question, and then after thinking it over are startled at the rational basis the doctor had for asking it.

Quite of the same complexion are the thoughts and words of the devout, philanthropic and scholarly Dr. Albert Barnes:

"I confess, when I look on a world of sinners and of sufferers; upon death-beds and graveyards; when I see my friends, my parents, my family, my people, my fellow-citizens; when I look upon a whole race, all involved in this sin and danger, and when I see the great mass of them wholly unconcerned, and when I feel that God only can save them, and yet he does not do it,—I am struck dumb. It is all dark, dark, dark to my soul, and I cannot disguise it."

The author of the *Theistic Argument* thus states the views of Schopenhauer, the exponent of the modern pessimistic theory:

"Physical pain, instead of being gradually eliminated, is constantly increased; and, the higher and more varied the endowments of any creature, the more acute becomes his sensibility alike to pleasure and pain, till at last, man, the crown and completion of organic nature, curiously summing up and reflecting in himself the functions and attributes of the lower creatures, is racked and tortured by pains of which they can have no conception. He purchases life by the physical torture of another, and at last longs for the grave as the only place where the weary are at rest. . . . Life is a constant discontent,—an insatiable thirst. Permanent

satisfaction is out of the question. No sooner is any new stage reached than new wants are created, and the longer the process is continued the more these wants are multiplied. . . . Man is simply the concrete embodiment of a thousand needs. The more intelligent he is, the more acute his sufferings. Life is but a process of dying; the history of the race a dream, long, heavy, and confused."

And Hartman, who in his way of thinking has many sympathizers, maintains that "creation is a curse, existence a misfortune, life a deepening disappointment, and the extinction of personal consciousness the only salvation."

An author, once before quoted, has voiced the thinking of souls without number:

"I know  
That care has iron crowns for many  
brows;  
That Calvarys are everywhere, whereon  
Virtue is crucified, and nails and spears  
Draw guiltless blood; that sorrow sits and  
drinks at sweetest hearts, till all their  
life is dry;  
That gentle spirits on this rack of pain  
Grow faint, or fierce and pray and curse  
by turns;  
That hell's temptations clad in heavenly  
guise  
And armed with might, lie evermore in wait  
Along life's path giving assault to all—  
Fatal to most;  
And that beside each fearful soul there  
walks  
The dire gaunt phantom of uncertainty."

The music of the great masters is written in the minor key or has in it minor strains. Many of the familiar tunes and hymns, and all negro melodies, have a tinge of sadness. A recent writer is undoubtedly correct in saying that "much of the most popular literature of every country derives its principal charm from voicing discontent." "Vanity and vexation of spirit" was the complaint of the wise man, and classical literature shows up to no better advantage. Homer falls into a vein of sadness when saying, "There is nothing whatever more wretched than man." Seneca praises death as the best invention of nature, and Marcus Aurelius holds it up as a positive good. English poetry is tinged with an absorbing sense of the sorrows of life. It colored the beautiful conceptions of Shelley and uttered itself, without restraint, in the lines of Byron:

"Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,  
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,  
And know, whatever thou hast been,  
Tis something better, not to be."

Rabindranath Tagore in the *Garner* sings:

"Over your creations of beauty there is  
the mist of tears."

A writer upon "Despair" asserts that three of the most influential writers in the English language during the last century preached a gospel of despondency—Carlyle, Emerson and George Elliot. Most romancers in late years have been inventing stories that depict "yearning affection, blighted hope, cruel betrayals, seduction and murder."

We in the United States are well off, but we are only a small part of the world, and only a half page or less of its history, and yet out of every hundred whom we daily meet, likely enough more than ninety will be found depressed by some infirmity, trouble or disappointment.

Notwithstanding the benefits of our boasted modern civilization there are bad symptoms of more than one kind that may well disturb our serenity. Sir James Browne, one of England's most distinguished alienists presiding in the psychiatry section of the "International Congress of Medicine," reported that the world-wide increase of lunacy is most alarming and altogether unaccountable. He said that in England alone insanity has increased 276 per cent. since 1879, against a population increase of only 87 per cent. Conditions show to scarcely better advantage in the United States.

And the "submerged masses" who, as the years go on, are coming more and more into surprising and even threatening prominence, give out expressions of bitterness, grief and anger rarely before heard in the history of civilized or uncivilized lands and are to-day casting foreboding shadows over this twentieth century.

Among all classes of people there are found social and civic unrest, domestic tragedies and infidelities, that are daily reported, and many times more of these are lived in silence than are published in the secular press.

A distinguished journalist was asked,

"What instinct makes a good newspaper man?" and replied, "The instinct to know where hell is next to break loose." Such are the news looked for, and found in morning and evening editions, and a great surprise would come were a day to pass with no report of a hell of some kind breaking loose somewhere.

Thus affairs appear to be going on—"a remorseless universe grinding out its destinies."

Not long since we had occasion to look up the suicide record. This mania is now classed in all countries as one of the national evils and certainly is suggestive of a tragic side of human life.

Reports from several governments of Europe show that from 1840 to 1900 suicides increased four hundred per cent.

In the United States from fifteen to twenty thousand suicides are the yearly record. The daily press rarely has an issue without an account of one or more suicides. People drown themselves, throw themselves in front of moving trains, take poison, use pistols, dynamite, ropes, razors,—every horrible device is resorted to. And one of the things now perplexing those who are gathering these statistics is that the increase of intelligence is enabling people to kill themselves without being found out. Were the truth known, it is probable that many deaths otherwise reported are really suicidal.

As to the prevailing motive leading to suicide there are different opinions.

The report of Frederick L. Hoffman, vice-president of the "American Statistical Association," is not, at first thought quite what would be expected. He offers the opinion that "a large number of suicides are to be attributed, not to any special affliction, either mental or physical, but to an unwillingness to live any longer under existing conditions. Something more serious might have been reasonably looked for, but still the report does not make against the argument before us.

A case in point is found in the following written statement by Colonel William L. De Lancy of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., which may be more generally representative than one would think:

"To whom it may concern: What I am to do, I do with a full realization that it is my end. I don't quite like the way of doing it. I would rather go by some other hand. During the past two years I have moralized, contemplated and fully determined upon this course. I am like the old gambler who simply got tired of the game and quit. Life is but a game and I am tired of it and quit. I do this in a perfectly sane and sober moment, without knowledge or thought of where I am going. I had no thought of this world before I came into it, and I have no idea of the next. I neither believe in transmigration, transubstantiation nor transfiguration. I am not altogether unorthodox. I believe in a creation and a Creator. But who he is, what he is, or where he is, I know not, and I don't believe anybody else does."

When reading such words one cannot escape the feeling that the prevailing unbelief in Bible revelation as to future rewards and punishments and a renunciation of allegiance to God and his authority are plotting a revenge, and that the insanity and the suicide mania are attending incidents.

And it may not be far from the truth to say that if faith in God were entirely banished from the human mind and if the conviction that death ends all were firmly enthroned, more than half the well-to-do people among us would soon go insane or enter the shadows of voluntary death. The fact is that even the professed atheist does not feel quite sure all the time that there is no God; he who denies the immortality of the human soul has hints now and then which he fails to shake off that there may be something beyond; and he who scoffs at the dogma of hell has the thought in odd moments that there may be a day of future reckoning. There are few, whatever the talk may be, that are not held back by a tagging uncertainty as to the future. Shakespeare suggests the reason why possibly every tenth man is not a suicide:

"That dread something after death,  
The Undiscovered country from whose  
bourne  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
And makes us rather bear those ills we  
have  
Than fly to others that we know not of."

Now if the Creator of humanity is such a being as to allow in this world of ours,

misery and suffering such as to make men insane, kill themselves, and wish for annihilation, why may he not allow like misery and suffering in some other world? Or, if an Almighty being "now permits his almighty to sleep while millions of his creatures, aye, of his own children, are allowed to rush on to wickedness and wretchedness," why may there not be equal indifference in the future?

Is the reply heard, "If these things are so, I cannot believe there is a God"? That is entirely another matter. What one can or cannot believe is not the question under discussion. Misery in this world is what we are facing and contemplating.

And if there are chastisements and punishments for sin and transgression in this world, and if in the nature of things there are discontent on every hand, hells without number no less merciless than death, then why may there not be a hell hereafter?

A word of admonition from a Unitarian preacher, J. W. Chadwick, may well be heeded. In his tract, *Punishment of Sin*, after speaking of the wholesome fear of entering on another life conscious that we have miserably squandered this; the apprehension that an accusing memory may dim the lustre of the bright immortal years; the dread of meeting those whose noble expectation we have not fulfilled, and the dismay of being known at length for what we really are, Mr. Chadwick continues thus:

"The preacher of religion who does not seek to bring to bear upon his people's minds these 'terrors of the Lord' is doing his prophetic duty in a miserably imperfect way. . . . The fact remains that in our liberal churches the doctrines of the love of God and the divine forgiveness have often tended to obscure the laws of moral retribution. 'God likes to forgive little boys; that's what he is for,' a budding Universalist is reported to have said, in justification of his latest peccadillo."

The Creator and Ruler of the physical universe has placed danger signals of many kinds right and left, and if there is any announcement that should arrest the steps of the wrongdoer it is this: It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God who is the author of Nature and the creator of humanity. Scarcely a step can

be taken without discovering that He who administers human affairs is a being who not merely "likes to forgive," but can order and execute penalties of the severest sort against sin, and even against careless and thoughtless transgression, if occasion seems to require such affliction.

The kindly warnings are, "Look out," "Dangerous crossing," "Not a public way," though it is broad and many to their sorrow walk therein.

The question that next confronts the inquirer is this, What immediately after death will befall the unrighteous?

#### *Death and Glory.*

A theory once popular, now abandoned, is termed, "Death and Glory." The phrase implies that when men die they "go straight to everlasting bliss," whatever the life on earth may have been. At the birth of Universalism, 1770, this theory was adopted by its followers with scarcely an exception. In a book entitled, *Universalism Illustrated and Defended*, by O. A. Skinner, the doctrine is stated thus: "So far as admission to endless glory is concerned the saint and sinner stand on a perfect level; all are alike, all equally honorable, glorious and happy. We shall be equal to the angels."

In 1841 Hosea Ballou stated that though he had been in the denomination twenty years he had never heard any other doctrine but death and glory preached but once, and then, so indistinctly and evasively as to leave hearers in doubt as to the preacher's position. As late as 1856, the Sunday School catechisms of the Universalists taught the death and glory theory.

But later the question frequently put by the Channing Unitarians to the Ballou Universalists was this,—"Can the passage through the doorway of death of itself change completely and fit for heaven the character of a reprobate?" This question and the reasoning that led up to it, and that followed, wrought havoc with this earlier belief. The more thoughtful Universalists were not long in seeing that the teachings of Dr. Ballou and his immediate followers was entirely out of harmony with a rational view of human nature and divine justice.

Since the days of Dr. Alonzo A. Miner (1814-1890) we have not known any intelligent clergyman of the Universalist denomination who has advocated the death and glory theory. As to the future of the human soul Universalists and Unitarians at present entertain essentially the same view.

#### *Annihilation.*

Another teaching as to the fate of the unrighteous is annihilation. According to this theory when the last unrighteous man dies the universe will be forever rid of sin and sinners. And it is sometimes seriously asked if such disposition of the unrighteous would not be all round a blessing and an advantage. There are those increasing in number, not very bad people, who feel that they have had enough of life, though not having had any serious quarrel with it and who also feel well nigh tired out and that they would prefer oblivion and endless repose to a continued existence. There are those who looking at human life "fairly and straight," discovering much injustice and cruelty and not seeing how any subsequent life is likely to be freer from limitation, richer in hope or fuller in achievement, would like above all else to end their existence in nothingness. "It is possible," as Swift has shown in *Gulliver*, "to think of an immortality from which we should pray to be delivered." And this immortality need not be terrible because of any distress that might accompany it but because of ill-adaptedness on one's part to make available any advantage over nothingness that might be promised. Others who have had a warped conception of heaven and hell say they would prefer universal extinction to immortality if any soul, however sinful, is to endure endless suffering in an endless future.

But on the other hand the objections to annihilation are weighty and several fold. First, it is not scriptural. No candid reader of the New Testament claims that annihilation was taught by our Lord to his disciples. The few passages that seem at first reading to point that way are not only easily explained but are overwhelmed by those that clearly teach the everlasting survival of consciousness. And it is safe to say that every recent advance in sci-

tific Biblical criticism is against the annihilation of the human soul.

Another objection to annihilation is based upon the indestructibility of things, especially of such things as memory and consciousness.

Maurice Maeterlinck, author of *La Mort*, puts the thought with brevity and force

"Total annihilation is an impossibility, for we are prisoners in an infinite, without outlet, where nothing perishes; where everything is dispersed, but nothing lost."

The metaphysical argument need not long detain us. Briefly stated it is this: The mass of mankind believe in a life after death and all men do this when the mind is in a normal condition. And no guide except the inspired record is safer than a normal and widespread conviction.

"There is a philosopher," says Guizot, "greater than Aristotle, Plato, Bacon, Pascal, Newton, and Kant; namely, Humanity." And it is this philosopher who with emphasis puts his negative upon the doctrine of annihilation.

The Duke of Argyll reasons thus:

"Of one thing we may be sure, that there are no fictions in Nature and no bad jokes. Whatever natural things really point to, they point to faithfully, and the conclusions really indicated are never false."

There is another objection to the theory of annihilation, based upon the fact that if it occurs at death it would prevent the enforcement of both consequential and judicial punishment. One of the consequences of sin is remorse, but in case of a sinner who dies while committing crime there would be no time for remorse. Nor would it be judicial punishment for a desperately wicked man just to be no more. There are men who hail with loud welcome any scrap of evidence that there is no after-destiny. Indeed, it would be something like an enchantment for some men to end their career in a state of eternal forgetfulness of all their debauches and blasphemies. "The august and icy solitudes of nothingness" would have for them no terror and they would kill themselves to-night if assured it would end all and if they thought they could escape the disgrace of a suicidal surrender. But what a defeat of justice it

would be should a monstrous lifelong wretch complete his most nefarious crimes, then retire to his room, lock his doors, bolt his windows, blow out the gas, seek his bed and sleep forever! Such easy release from those grand and awful moral responsibilities and accountabilities which man's existence solemnly has imposed upon him, cannot be possible in a well administered universe. The expectation of such men must perish, but their souls shall live on forever and ever.

Again, what is termed the moral argument should not be overlooked. That is, while annihilation might subserve the wish of unrighteous men, a belief in it can never inspire or lead to what is grand or worthy.

An eminent writer on these subjects puts the case nearly in these words: Where is the man who can stand up and say, I was a drunkard, a gambler, profane, licentious, a Sabbath breaker, and prayerless; but I became an annihilationist and instantly lost all desire for vicious things? Or where is to be found a young man or woman who having been dissolute will say, I was reformed by embracing the doctrine of annihilation? Or what man when contemplating murder or suicide was ever arrested in his purpose by a belief in annihilation? The tendency of this belief is rather to destroy the restraining force of moral and religious obligation and at length land one on those bleak shores of hopelessness where crime, violence and suicide are not far off.

There are a few annihilationists who contend that man has been endowed with an endless life conditionally; that it has been forfeited by sin and is regained only through faith in Christ.

But it seems far more rational and certainly more scriptural to say that God has placed the immortality of every human soul beyond any peradventure. The omnipotence of God cannot make two neighboring mountains without a valley between; nor make two and two other than four. And so, if in creating a human soul God endowed it with immortality, he may not now, or in the future, be able or be in a moral attitude to smite it out of existence. It is not irrational to believe that one of the attributes of moral agency is immor-

tality. At any rate, if some things, as no one can doubt, are impossible at the hands of God, it would seem to be that one of those impossible things is the annihilation of an intelligent and morally responsible human soul, however perverse and neglectful of the Christ-life it may have been. Concurrence in an opinion expressed by the author of *Ecce Deus* is not difficult:

"It is easy to pronounce the word annihilation, but has its meaning been fully considered? There need not be any hesitation in reverently declaring that God cannot annihilate a moral agent."

#### *Limited Punishment and Ultimate Annihilation.*

This theory more explicitly stated is, that those who die in their sins will wake to consciousness in another state or world, be consigned to a place of punishment and after suffering for a while be blotted out of existence. This doctrine has been termed by some extinctionism, by others destructionism. It has, however, been so extremely difficult either on scriptural, scientific or philosophical grounds to defend this theory that but few are now its advocates.

#### *Atrophy of the Soul.*

Classed under these same terms, extinctionism and destructionism, and maintained chiefly by those who feel that there is little or no Biblical or rational ground for either annihilation or restoration, is the theory that the souls of the unrighteous begin their sufferings at death and at the same time begins a gradual loss of the different faculties and powers of the mind and later those powers pass into a state of hopeless idiocy closely bordering on unconsciousness—a torpid state in which pain, remorse, the sense of guilt and shame will no longer be felt, and at length there will reign in hell the silence of helpless imbeciles, a silence that shall be unbroken forever.

In one of the strange meditations of Swedenberg is this description of the unrighteous in the spirit world:

"There were some who believed that they should easily receive divine truths after death when they heard them from the angels and that they should then believe, amend their lives and be received into heaven. But it was not so: they lay as if dead."

No doubt those who advance this theory, which atrophies the soul, mean well for the race; they would shield the unrighteous from endless suffering and have only the monument of sin remain in the universe—a graveyard of living souls that never think or feel. But, however satisfactory in some respects this theory may seem, it certainly is not supported by the trend of Bible teaching, and its philosophical support is very greatly diminished if we carefully distinguish between the effects of sin upon the physical body and upon the mental powers. While sin often results in an impairment or disease that injures and sometimes destroys the tissues of the body and cells of the brain, yet there are reasons for supposing that the activities of the soul itself are not in the least diminished. The probabilities are, as we have already seen, that unrighteous men in the future world will retain all their inclination to continue in vice, and that when the resurrection body is received they will have unabated and ever-increasing desire to sin, though restrained in their opportunities. A passionate man in this present life is no less lustful as the years go by, though his physical organism is passing into decay; a murderer is no less a murderer, though his arm is so palsied that he cannot strike an intended blow.

The history of Satan as presently will be seen, may throw light upon the thought before us. He is under restraint, but though centuries have passed since his fall, his energy and malignancy appear just as pronounced today as when first he was banished from heaven. The probabilities are many to one that if we could forecast the under world the unrighteous would not be seen composing themselves for an endless sleep, but would be found growing more and more sensitive and desperately active as eternity rolls on. And hell as depicted by Dr. Channing and other candid and thoughtful Unitarians, would be fully realized.

#### *Future Restoration.*

Only one other theory as to the fate of the unrighteous at death need engage attention; it is that of limited punishment beginning at death, followed by ultimate

restoration at some time in the future. This view is more generally held than any other of the so-called unorthodox theories. Universalists and Unitarians with scarcely an exception now contend that the sinner must be punished and that the punishment will continue as long as the sinner remains impenitent and until the merited punishment for sin has been inflicted. Roman Catholic ecclesiastics hold this view as to their own people, Purgatory being a place for both the punishment and purification of all Roman Catholics, of popes as well as of the humblest and wickedest members of the church.

The contention of the Universalist and the Unitarian is that though the sinner should continue his rebellion for a long time, a very long time, at length he will become tired of it, give up his wicked ways, ask and receive God's pardon and enter heaven "The glory of Paradise will thus swallow up the night of hell though perhaps unmeasured ages hence."

This view, however, cannot fairly be deduced from the Bible, nor from the nature of things, but is held because of the horror of an endless punishment. The Unitarian opinion on this point is thus stated by two of its advocates:

"Heaven and earth, and stars in their infinite number, all worlds that roll through the great Creator's space, would raise one universal shout of horror at the endless punishment of sinners." . . . . . "An eternal hell would make the God inflicting it more reprobate and more deserving of such pangs than any human being, though we should imagine one uniting in himself the crimes of all the Caesars and the Borgias, the Hapsburgs and the Bourbons, the Sultans and the Tsars."

But are these Unitarian brethren dead sure that their opinions are any more infallible than much other guess-work?

And it is also insisted that no human being can realize a punishment that is to last forever.

This may be true. But in reply it can be said that a multitude of things that enter human life and thought are such as easily push realization one side. An endless heaven is as far from human comprehension as is an endless Gehenna. Few, if any criminals led to the scaffold

realize that they are going quickly into eternity; much less do they realize what eternity is. Even after the cap is drawn over the eyes they often half-hopefully wait the reading of a reprieve. But the drop falls. "There is an opium sky stretched over all the world."

*Restoration Not a New Testament Teaching.*

Before pronouncing against the endless punishment of sin and in favor of ultimate restoration, it may be well to take into account the meaning of two or three words and phrases bearing upon this subject. The highest scholarship, for instance, has decided that the original and proper sense of the Hebrew word *olam*, translated everlasting, sometimes denotes a duration less than eternity, but always means the longest duration of which the subject or object defined is capable, whether the object be the earth, a man, or Jehovah. The Gerek adjective *aoinios*, translated everlasting, is used in the New Testament sixty-six times; twice in relation to God and his glory, fifty-one times concerning the happiness of the righteous, six times of miscellaneous subjects, but with the plain significance of endlessness, and seven times it is descriptive of future punishment.

The phrase *eis ton aiona*, translated "forever," uniformly denotes "endless duration," and is employed sixty-one times, six of which relate to future punishment.

The expression *eis tousaivnas ton aionon*, translated "forever and ever", is used twenty-two times, in eight of which it describes the duration of the ascriptions of glory and honor, praise and dominion, to Jehovah. It is used fourteen times in the book of Revelation; twice to express the duration of the kingdom of Christ; three times to express the endless duration of the power and glory and dominion of God, six times to express the endless existence and life of God, and in the remaining three instances it is employed to express the duration of the punishment of the wicked.

The misuse of these words at any cost of candor and reason in an effort to limit the duration of future punishment is from

an exegetical point of view, dishonest and entirely unpardonable. The words have to be emptied of their ordinary meaning before they can subserve the purposes sought. The duration of the bliss of the redeemed is also imperilled by this false exegesis, for, as St. Gregory long ago declared: "If that be false which God threatens (eternal punishment) then that which he promises (eternal life) is false also." Speaking of the terms in question, Professor Moses Stuart puts the case thus:

"If then, the words *aion* and *aionios* are applied sixty times in the New Testament to designate the continuance of the future existence of the righteous and at least twelve times to designate the continuance of the future misery of the wicked, by what principles of interpreting language does it become possible for us to avoid the conclusion that *aion* and *aionios* have the same sense in both cases? The result seems to me to be plain and philologically and exegetically certain. It is this—we must either admit the endless misery of hell or give up the endless happiness of heaven" \*

In a word, the Bible leaves the impenitent in Gehenna suffering the judicial penalty of their sin; it nowhere speaks of their restoration; it gives no assurance that punishment is of limited duration or that the final holiness and happiness of all mankind may ever be expected.

The Rev. Thomas Starr King (Unitarian) in a pamphlet entitled "Eternal Punishment" thus states his conviction and that of other leaders in his denomination:

"I freely say that I do not find the doctrine of unlimited salvation of all souls clearly stated in any text or in any discourse that has been reported from the lips of Christ. I do not think we can fairly maintain that the final restoration of all men is an explicit doctrine of the Four Gospels. We needlessly narrow the grounds of opposition to sacrificial orthodoxy by attacking it from such a position."

\* There is one passage employed by restorationists that at first thought appears to support their contention. But a fair interpretation will lead to its abandonment. A correct paraphrase reads thus: Christ preached by his spirit through Noah (Christ is always the preacher) to the disobedient antediluvians, for whose conversion the patience of God waited long, but who, nevertheless, rejected that preaching, were destroyed in consequence, and are now detained in Hades with the fallen angels until the day of judgment. (1 Peter iii. 18-20.)

Columbus Green, a life-long and intimate friend and kindred of Theodore Parker, asked him this question: "As a Greek scholar and not as a theologian, will you tell me what the scriptures teach concerning the final condition of the finally impenitent?" Mr. Parker replied: "There is no doubt that Jesus Christ taught the endless suffering of the wicked. But I do not accept the doctrine on his authority."

#### *Punishment and Sinfulness Co-existent.*

At the present time those who oppose the orthodox view generally concede that future punishment, if there is such a thing, must co-exist with sinfulness, whatever the duration may be. In other words, as long as a conscious being remains sinful, so long must he be a sufferer. Everlasting wickedness will bring with it everlasting woe.

But what evidence, it may be asked, can be presented to show that the so-called finally impenitent sinner will give up his sin? Has such a claim any better support than a guess or a wish? One need not be told that those who most carefully have studied these problems are assured that punishment in no way is reformatory. Jesse Pomeroy has been in prison from boy to manhood, certainly long enough to reform. But no change for the better is apparent or on his part, attempted. He spends his time not in religious or moral improvement or contemplation, but in planning some way of escape and, with a screwdriver in hand, would have killed a prison guard the other night if the guard had not drawn his revolver in self defence.

Nor is there word or hint from Christ that Gehenna is to be a reformatory for those who enter it. In fact a reformatory in the nature of things it cannot be; it is a place whose design is not to reform but to punish. It is a wise observation of Edmund Burke that the infliction of penalty for crime has not the slightest tendency to improve the character of the guilty. Criminals after being in prison for twenty years or more, commit another crime, worse perhaps than any previous one, and do it the very day or night after their release. Criminals while in prison

have been reformed, but it has been through the ministry of Christianity, not through bolts and cells.

Or, considering the subject from another point of view, one is confronted with these questions: If in this world with all its inducements and invitations to righteousness men turn from the offers of mercy and continue in their course of self-inflicted misery, and at length lie down and die in darkness and horror, what is the likelihood that they will be any better minded in a world to which they have been banished under the curse of God? Or what the likelihood that God will show mercy hereafter on some grander scale than he has done in the present life? Or what the likelihood that in the future he will provide some more effective scheme of redemption than the one offered to men here and now? Or what the likelihood that if the Holy Spirit cannot or does not in this world, where stood the cross of Christ, win the unrighteous to the truth that he will be able to do so in a place where the most hardened outcasts and criminals the world has known are confined—the abode of demons, God's great prison house, "without chapel or chaplain?" Would not such a place be the last one in God's universe in which to reform unrighteous and vicious men?

#### *The Despotism of Sinful Habits.*

The enslaving effect of sin and transgression should also be taken into account. There is an unrepealable law that the course pursued by the unrighteous leads to greater unrighteousness and to ultimate fixedness of character (Rev. xxii, 11). The longer a path of unrighteousness is walked in, the stronger become the probabilities that there will be no change; hence the probabilities every day are increasing that the direction in which the transgressor is now going, is the direction he will continue to go until his destiny is unalterably and forever fixed; his choice of the better thing becoming at length impossible. Such are the probabilities. The wider the range of observation, the stronger will be the conviction that there is no despotism so absolute and tyrannical as that of sinful habits, though there are

many assurances that if even very bad men will repent and become righteous, they will find in God a refuge and friend. Yet the fact and peril remain that after a time the transgressor will have no disposition to turn from his evil ways or to ask God for help. Slavery to vice ultimately becomes so relentless and remorseless that its victims will suffer and still continue in their wretchedness, though knowing that reform would restore them to health and respectability. To-day they may resolve to do better, but tomorrow they deliberately break their resolves. And after a while, their confession is that they cannot do as they know they ought. The maxim, "Once a criminal always a criminal" needs qualification, but is based upon general observation. "People do not persist in their vices because they are not weary of them," says Hazlitt, "but because they cannot leave them off. It is the nature of vice to leave no resource but in itself."

#### *The Fatal Line.*

And what adds to the dismay of these experiences is the fact that those who are the most self-composed and most indifferent to all religious appeal are those who have sinned most and are nearest to the fatal line or already have crossed it.

The vision granted John in Patmos was such as from the nature of things, and from human nature, would be expected. The unrighteous are in hell from their own choice, and prefer to remain there, even if the portals of heaven were wide open to them. They are represented as in the greatest torment imaginable, but still by their own choice continue in their torment:

"And the fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given unto it to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat; and they blasphemed the name of God which hath the power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory. (Rev. xvi, 8-9.)

"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." (Rev. xvi, 8-11.)

There is possibly another reason why the wicked may choose to go abiding in the solitudes and darkness of the other world; it is based upon the well established law that every word spoken, every thought cherished, and every slightest emotion, made their record, not on the face alone, but on the entire physical man. The criminal was nearer right than he thought when saying: "I am all face."

A Unitarian writer is doubtless correct in saying:

"The human body is plastic to the stress of good and evil thoughts, of high and low ideals. If we could have a perfect chemistry, I doubt not that it would detect in each man's bodily tissues an 'abstract, brief chronicle, of all the vices' of his past life, of all the ignoble passions to which in the sphere of the imagination he has allowed full swing, though he has not dared to put them into the concrete of action."

It is George Eliot who says:

"Under every guilty secret there is hidden a brood of guilty wishes whose unwholesome, infecting life is cherished by the darkness. The contaminating effect of deeds often lies less in the commission than in the consequent adjustment of our desires,—the enlistment of our self-interest on the side of falsity."

Now the orthodox theory is that the active forces that build the present physical body will some time in the future, build up another body out of spiritualized materials (the resurrection body) and that the transference of both scars and adornments to this new body will be accurate and complete. Not only "the muddled, bloated face of intemperance; the keen, ferret look of the covetous; the coarse, animal features of the profligate" but also the faults that, during life have escaped detection and social penalty will appear in that registration without diminishment—

The times demand that Christian people should take a stand. If we are to be built up on our most holy faith (Jude 20), then we must see to it that we "continue in the faith grounded and settled" (Col. 1:23). On all hands, attempts are being made to move believers away from the hope of the gospel. Strange to say, the very means that should strengthen faith are to-day employed to weaken it. "Beloved, believe not every spirit." There is absolutely no reason

a dreadful and unescapable inheritance. It will not be the man that had been publicly tried and hanged for murder, but the man who, guilty of crime, managed during his lifetime to escape detection, who will try the hardest to keep out of sight. It will not be the man who was known to be a fornicator and an adulterer, and did not care for it, but the man who had been successful in keeping up a show of respectability, unsuspected by friends, wife and children, who through eternity, never will show his disfigured face if there is for him in hell a possible hiding place. What hypocrite is there who will be able to stand the averted eyes and the visible sorrow of kindred and friends when the truth is made known?

The evangelical Christian bases his hope of escape from these dreadful penalties by means of a registration that will cover the horror-striking one. We mean the registration of sorrow, repentance, belief in the Christ life and the blood of Christ.

But to return. Since the Unitarian and Universalist concede that punishment may continue generation after generation, ten thousand times ten thousand years, perhaps; since punishment has no tendency whatever to reform the depraved; since the penalty of unrighteousness is an increase of unrighteousness; and since the mask of wicked and wretched men will be completely torn off, what rational expectation can there be for the restoration of those who, steeped in iniquity, enter the world of punishment where the curse of Christ is ever repeating itself, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

(To be continued.)

that leadership in spiritual should be conceded to men whose qualifications are merely intellectual, or mainly so.—*The Christian Standard, London.*

Sir John Herschel: "All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths contained in the sacred Scriptures."

# Is the Virgin Birth in the Christian Creed?

A Symposium—The Editor.

The Virgin Birth has never been denied in the twenty centuries of the Christian era, except by the enemies of the Christian religion. In recent years there has sprung up a new school of Prophets, who modestly select for their pseudonym, The Modern Mind. While they pose as the latest product of religious evolution, they go back to the dark ages for their so-called new thought. Celsus contributed the assault upon the Virgin Birth, and the jeer at the miracles of Jesus. Porphyry taught the strangle-hold which put Daniel down and out and as a by-product convicted Jesus of ignorance and falsehood. Astruc, indignant at Moses because the Ten Commandments interfered with his dissolute living, invented the documentary theory which reduced Moses to a myth and the Commandments to a night-mare dream.

Who can mention anything new in assault upon the Word of God that has not proceeded from one of these chimeras, or from concocting two or more of them in various combinations? The pseudonym, The Modern Mind, is well selected and quite appropriate with this slight qualification; the new school of prophets neither possess modernity nor exhibit mentality. It may be doubted if from Celsus to Aked, the whole school has produced more than a score worthy to be named as more than common.

The newest prophet of the hour swings on the Golden Gate. With all the modesty of his school, he selects as his topic for the world's enlightenment, The Virgin Birth. The New York Times for the nonce laying aside its motto, "All the news that's fit to print," enabled the prophet to affront all American Christianity. No topic could have been selected surer to sting to white wrath every honorable and self-respecting Catholic and Protestant, without regard to name or creed. We give the Special Dispatch;

*Special to The New York Times.*

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 1.—At the First Congregational Church to-day Dr. Charles F. Aked, the pastor, announced by implication that he did not adhere to, and would not support the doctrine of the miraculous birth of Christ.

"As to the creed of the miraculous birth of Jesus," said Dr. Aked, "let us examine the books of the New Testament. Mark did not speak of the birth of Jesus; John, who wrote mostly of the death and ascension of Christ, did not speak of his birth. Luke did say that he was of miraculous origin, but it is conceded that Luke got his information from Matthew.

"The latest investigation shows that Matthew contradicted himself. In the New Testament version of the Gospel according to Matthew, he says that Christ was of miraculous birth. In an older manuscript which has been discovered and authenticated as being the work of the Apostle, Matthew says that Joseph was the father of Jesus.

"My conclusion upon this question is that the faith of Mark and John and James and Paul is good enough for me. It is good enough for any Christian. These men say nothing about Jesus having come into the world in a miraculous way. I prefer to stand with them. What do we mean, then, by saying He was divine? There is divinity in us, but so much more in Him that I prefer to call Him divine."

## THE THIRD DEGREE.

Dr. Charles F. Aked is a clergyman of the third degree. He left his denomination to become a Baptist in order to secure a famous New York Pulpit. He left the Baptists to secure a great Congregational pulpit in San Francisco. Three denominations in quick succession in a few years ought to enable him to qualify as an expert and offer himself as spokesman for all denominations. What his next transition is to be, is uncertain. His

present creed as given above has three Articles:

1. The Holy Virgin was a Mother—but not a wife. 2. The Christ Child was base-born, because born out of wedlock. 3. Matthew was a liar. He told two different stories about the birth of Jesus in the two Gospels he wrote which bear his name.

It is evident these do not include the whole of his creed. If occasion demands another Associated Press dispatch over the land, he can furnish other Articles, just as truthful or Christian as these. What Dr. Aked pretends to think about the Scriptures is a matter of no importance. He does not think. *He merely chatters.* The important question is what do honorable gentlemen think of Dr. Aked?

He is an Evangelical Christian pastor, paid one of the largest salaries in the land. He preaches bald infidelity. Voltaire, Paine or Ingersoll would find it difficult to equal him. His occupancy of an evangelical pulpit for one hour after declaring such balderdash to be the Word of God, as the above, was dishonest and immoral. Such betrayal of trust in business or politics would be scathingly denounced and rebuked by all honorable men as a crime. It would be so regarded by any court that was properly asked to take cognizance of the malfeasance.

Scholarship is not involved. His utterances are not scholarly. They are only the echo of the infidelity of the past twenty centuries. They have not the faintest semblance of foundation in fact. The only question involved is personal morals. A lawyer would be disbarred; a broker would be expelled; a commercial traveller would be dismissed as a scoundrel; a soldier in time of war would be shot, for such gross betrayal of trust. The minister who can for notoriety's sake descend from his lofty position as a Christian Clergyman to play the demagogue to win the applause of persons as destitute of conscience as they are of honor or knowledge need not wait long for his reward. He may safely be left to the penalty of hearing what his own conscience has to say about his sin when he is alone.

The Christian Church has a duty it dare not further ignore. Brand the braggart that all men may know his true character. Do not argue with him; do not indict him; mark him so that even the urchins of his town may know him to be what he is. The common people will do the rest. They will do it so thoroughly that he will be forced to cry with Cain, "My Punishment is Greater Than I Can Bear."

#### THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

Dr. Aked, in a signed card in the Public Ledger, Philadelphia, February 20, jauntily dismisses the sensation he created, as *trivial business.* "It is not big enough to be called a tempest in a tea-pot. It is only a hurricane in a demi-tasse." He is in error. It is the rumbling that foretells the coming of the Day of Judgment. This suggestion may occasion another brilliant epigram. It may be remembered that Peter declared that there were "scoffers walking after their own lusts, saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. They willingly are ignorant . . . . that the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." *The scoffers had no ark.*

The Apostle had a very clear conception of the character of the persons responsible for the false doctrines of his day. One could easily believe that he had an eye upon the present day. "There were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you; whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." (2 Peter, ii. 1-3.)

## IS IT A POLEMICAL "HURRICANE IN A DEMI-TASSE?"

The most striking and illuminating contribution to this discussion we have seen is the short editorial of the Public Ledger under the above caption. It is refreshing to turn from foolish bombast and self-commendation to a mosaic of sterling, practical common sense.

"An interesting theological situation has developed in the case of Dr. Charles Aked, of San Francisco, following his publicly expressed views on the miraculous birth of Christ. A statement to the *Public Ledger* by Dr. Aked appears in another column.

Doctor Aked resigned as the president of the Federation of Churches in answer to a protest signed by four Presbyterian pastors. The resignation was refused by a large majority.

Doctor Aked's views on the virgin birth are regarded by some as frankly Unitarian. He occupies a pulpit in the Congregational body, which fought its greatest battles in defense of a Trinitarian Godhead.

The issue, which is related to a doctrine in which Catholic and Protestant theologians agree, raises the question whether a minister holding a doctrine of divinity which denies the virgin birth may consistently preach in the pulpit of a Trinitarian church. To the lay mind the situation is awkward. The theologian regards it as an exegetical problem rather than one of faith. Congregationalism gives large liberties in matters of dogma. It is probable that the action of the Federation of Churches in San Francisco expresses the mind of his denomination, which will agree with him that this 'is only a hurricane in a demi-tasse,' all of which shows how orthodox standards have changed since the days of Professor Park, Moses Stuart and even Henry Ward Beecher.

## THE AKED STORY OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH.

We omit as not essential to the discussion about one-half of the card. It is devoted to the "muddling of the Immaculate Conception of Mary with the New Testament stories of the virgin birth of Jesus, by persons who could not distinguish between the birth of a woman and the birth of her son;" declaration that his "zeal against the Barbary Coast was responsible for the notoriety given his heresy by men, who of themselves, could

not have broken into the front page of the daily newspaper with an axe;" and testimonials to his orthodoxy by great men of like views with himself. The gist of the matter is contained in this selection.

"My view of the birth stories set forth in these paragraphs from my published sermon:

"The story of the virgin birth of Jesus has priceless value for the church. It has made its way into our creeds, our hymns, our Christmas legends. It would be difficult to imagine the centuries and the ages and the world of our day without the story of the Virgin Mother and her Child. Yet the value of the birth stories lies, not in their statement of fact, but in their effort to construct a theory. In plain words, the stories of the virgin birth of Jesus in two of the Gospels and the dogmatic assertion of the creeds represent the attempt of the church, too early made, in its fresh impulses of adoration to explain the inexplicable personality of Jesus.

## TESTIMONY OF THE GOSPELS.

"It was not the attempt of the whole Church. It was not the attempt of the Apostolic body. We have four Gospels. From two of them the birth stories are missing. Matthew and Luke preserve the narrative of the miraculous birth. Mark and John do not. Mark is our earliest Gospel. He has not a word to say about the virgin birth. John has most to say about the incarnation.

"But John does not mention the incidents connected with our Saviour's birth. Luke's Gospel, as Luke himself tells us, is a compilation from previously existing material. Luke had Matthew or Matthew's original before him as he wrote; so that the sole authority for the stories in the four Gospels is Matthew. And even so far as Matthew's Gospel is concerned the case is by no means clear. In the latest translation of the New Testament, Doctor Mofatt accepts without comment the reading from Von Soden's edition of the Greek New Testament and boldly translates (Chap. i. v. 16), 'Joseph, to whom the Virgin Mary was betrothed, the father of Jesus.'"

"If you are helped by the story of the miraculous birth as it appears in Luke and in Matthew, so be it. If it helps you, hold to it. But if, on the other hand, you choose to say, as for myself I do say, 'I am on the side of Mark and John, of Peter and Paul; they could accept his divinity and serve him through life and death without grounding their faith upon the stories of the virgin birth and so can I'—if a devout student of

Scripture speaks in this sense to us to-day. Christian charity is bound to accept that view as permissible within the limits of our Christian liberty."

After laboring through this story, we failed to find any reason for the signed card in the *Public Ledger*. The telegram to the New York Times is clearer, more concise, and puts the case more forcibly and creditably for the speaker than his own card.

#### A SECRET OF CHURCH HISTORY.

A very interesting and illuminating secret of church history is disclosed.

"What is really strange is that these views of mine passed unchallenged in the more orthodox circles in New York Baptists. Some pages of the sermon, those that deal with the New Testament stories of the birth of Jesus, are taken bodily, without the change of a syllable, from a sermon preached in the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, New York. I happen to remember that Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Sr., was present, because Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., talked to me about it afterwards and told me what his father had said. I cannot remember whether Dr. Conant, one of the deacons, editor of the Baptist organ, the *Examiner*, was present. But the fact is that for four years I preached in that church, and no such silly controversy as this developed."

Is Standard Oil also among the prophets of The Modern Mind? Many bitter things have been said about this great philanthropy. "This is the most unkindest cut of all."

Why did not he tell the whole story? Why did he omit the interesting and impressive climax? It would have been a fit conclusion to this secret had he said: "The church in which I preached this sermon has gone out of business, although backed by more money than any church of the Christian era."

An illuminated sign on the front of the closed building containing something like this, might serve as an epitaph for both church and prophet.

"The pulpit of this church was occupied for a little while by a prophet of The Modern Mind. Upon one occasion he defamed the Holy Virgin by declaring that she was a Mother but not a Wife. No

one resented it. The church is closed. God is not dead yet."

#### A PICK-UP FROM A MUCK-HEAP.

The signed card begins with this paragraph:

"There is nothing original in my views. They are the common property of educated men and women in all the Protestant churches of the world. There is nothing new in them. All the people who write books and all the people who read books have for long been familiar with them. It is only the people who are opening their eyes so wide."

The only true statement in this paragraph is "there is nothing original in my views and there is nothing new in them." His views are only pick-ups from a muck-heap. It would be illegal to reprint the coarse scurrilities, foul obscenities and profane blasphemies said against religion by the degenerate profligates of the past centuries. For one to rummage among this garbage and rake out a sneer or a slur at the virgin birth would be an offence against decency. To label the scandal "what I and all other educated men and women in all the Protestant churches of the world believe," is unparalleled insolence. Over against this flaunt we need only mention two facts.

The Christian Church celebrates Christmas everywhere and always in the same way as from the beginning. Not a church or Sunday school in the world ever has celebrated, or ever will, the virgin birth as "a theory," but only as "a fact." The universal Christian Church has never been without a positive statement in its creed that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary." In all Christian churches of all creeds, the Apostles' Creed declares this truth and it is responsively repeated by minister and people at nearly every public service throughout the world. This is not "a dogmatic assertion to explain the inexplicable personality of Jesus." It is only a declaration of belief in the inspired announcement of Matthew and Luke, who wrote under the direct supervision of the Holy Spirit.

It is bald effrontery for a *pseudo* scholar to translate Matthew i. 16, thus: "Joseph

to whom the Virgin Mary was *betrothed*, (not married) the father of Jesus." So far as being true to the original text, he might have substituted *Beelzebub* for Joseph. Then he would have invented something entirely new. When Wellhausen, the head of the clan wrote his commentary on Matthew, he began with the third chapter, leaving out the first and second chapters without a word of explanation. Now that is something worth while. When you face something you don't like and can't overthrow, cut it out. Make such a clean sweep that your readers will have to find out from others that the troublesome fact ever was in. A still more famous scholar than either of these, the real founder of the tribe had a simpler and easier method of dealing with God's Word. It has never been improved upon. It is to-day the most universally adopted argument of The Modern Mind. He merely said, "Taint so." (Gen. iii. 4).

When a Christian clergyman quotes from such authorities as these as a part of divine worship in a church dedicated to the Son of the Virgin he escapes being charged with sacrilege only by pleading one of two defenses, ignorance or lunacy.

#### THE GOSPELS AT COURT.

Blackstone and Greenleaf are legal luminaries who need no borrowed light. Neither requires corroborative evidence to prove anything he has said. Greenleaf's Treatise on Evidence is a standard authority in every Court in the civilized world. He examined the Testimony of the Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence administered in Courts of Justice. The evidence of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as recorded in their Gospels, after a most searching examination, he declared "to be *honest, able, consistent, in conformity with experience.*" The books of the Evangelists, under the Jural Rule of an Ancient Document, would be accepted by any Court in the world as requiring nothing to sustain their truthfulness but their own contents. Matthew gives personal testimony to the Virgin Birth. He obtained his information, doubtless from one of the only two

person's competent to testify. Greenleaf says: "Luke's Gospel, if only regarded as the work of a contemporary historian, would be entitled to our confidence. It is more than this. It is the result of careful inquiry and examination made by a person of science, intelligence and education, concerning subjects which he was perfectly competent to investigate; as such it is entitled to be adduced as original, competent and satisfactory evidence of the matters it contains." There is one insult which the Anglo-Saxon resents as unpardonable. The only adequate reply is personal violence. Dr. Aked may revile the Holy Virgin as a Mother, but not a wife; the Christ-child as base-born, because born out of wedlock, and escape violence. No hearer of his, would have been so fortunate, even in the Church, had he dared ask the clergyman, "Have you *your* mother's marriage certificate handy?"

#### ACHAN OF THE MODERN MIND.

The primitive Achan was only a low down sneak thief. He had no defence to offer. He saw some "goodly garments and some gold and silver" and took them. It mattered not to him that they were forbidden. *He wanted, and took.* His sin involved defeat for Israel and the death of thirty-six soldiers. Incidentally it resulted in ruin and death for himself and his family.

The Achan of the Modern Mind is a Holy Priest of the Most High God. He generally occupies a high station, with great honors and receives large emoluments. He was selected for the position because of professed faith in the Word of God, and a fervent pledge to devote himself wholly to teaching and maintaining it. He does not scruple to advocate privately and publicly his disbelief in the Articles of Religion which he solemnly declared he accepted. He seeks every possible opportunity to advertise his refusal to teach and maintain the Word of God, in violation of his pledge given with all the sanctity of an oath. As if to add to the enormity of his offence, by the greatest possible effrontery, he selects those incidents of the

Scriptures most tenderly regarded and fervently believed by the common people of his flock, as the butt of his wit and banter or stinging slur and invective. One favorite topic is the birth of Jesus, most sacred to Catholic and Protestant alike, and universally regarded by all Christendom as the chief corner stone of the Christian faith. The Scriptures in the most explicit manner possible to human language declare the truth of the Virgin Birth.

Does the Achan of the Modern Mind surrender his evangelical Christian position when he ceases to be Christian in belief? Not on your life! What! All that salary! All the high honors and great privileges! Perish the thought!

This modern prophet is only a belated harlequin. He grimaces, wags his head, twirls his jester's sword of lath and gabbles about Holy things as if they were the proper subjects of low ribaldry or suggestive *double entendre*. He only *apes* his boasted forbear by gibbering in an unknown tongue. Why take him seriously? He does not make any pretense of taking himself that way. He is the quickest to resent any imitation of his own methods when applied to himself.

The Church soberly argues and learnedly contends with the joker instead of seizing his weapon of lath and applying it where it will be most appropriate and effectual. We have encouraged the harlequins by our courtesy until they have become an insufferable nuisance. When we request evidence for their blatant assertions, they gabble on. When we remind them of the consensus of Christian scholarship for twenty centuries, they flippantly wave a hand as if to say, "ta! ta!" and gabble on. When we soberly repeat Jesus' words to the Disciples in his farewell talk: "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you;" they smile superciliously and exclaim, "So he said!"

We quote Matthew as one who was present at that farewell talk and who wrote in his Gospel under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, the story of the con-

versation of the angel with Joseph; the jester gabbles on.

"Matthew contradicted himself by saying one thing about Jesus' birth in one of his Gospels, and another thing in another Gospel of the same name." We check the deluge of chatter to ask, "can you name anybody who ever saw or read or heard of the fabulous Gospel of Matthew?" Another wave of the hand and "ta! ta!" The stream rushes on; "Luke was mistaken about the birth of Jesus. Everybody knows Matthew told him." Try, try, try, to stop the vaudeville monologue, but the voice keeps running. It is set so, and wound up to run until run down; "I stand with Mark and John and Paul. They are silent about the miraculous birth, and of course, silence is denial;" Fudge! Don't get mad! Turn to Peter, the rugged, stalwart fisherman, and read what he said. You can imagine he uttered the words in that strident tone he learned when his voice had to compete with the howling and shrieking of the storm on the Sea of Galilee, but *was heard above it all*. So, now!

"The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished; presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. As natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, they speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Their heart they have exercised with covetous practises; cursed children; which have forsaken the right way and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but was rebuked for his iniquity; the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet.

"These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than,

after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandments delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire." *2 Peter ii., 9-22.*

Achan of the Modern Mind is positive that this Epistle has no place in the canon. We don't blame him. There is not a rogue who is not deliriously desirous of

Andrew Jackson: "That Book, sir, is the rock on which our republic rests."

John Quincy Adams: "I have for many years made it a practice to read through the Bible once every year; it is an inexhaustible mine of knowledge and virtue."

A subscriber in New Brunswick returns us his February Number of *THE CHAMPION*. In it the form from page 80 to the end is omitted, and in its stead the form from page 65 to 80 is repeated. This is evidently an error in the binding department. Lest the same mutilated copy may have gone to others, we insert this notice, asking anyone who may have received a copy of this character, to write immediately and a perfect copy will be sent by return mail.

#### THE VEIN OF NON-BELIEF.

The most dangerous attacks upon the authority of the Christian records are no longer couched in the coarse terms of Voltaire and Tom Paine, but borrow from the language of Zion the phrases of saints and confessors. Many of the writers were trained in the school of evangelical theology; and if they choose its most unguarded statements as the objects of their attack because these are the easiest to assail, they adopt a lofty tone and profess to be actuated by a sincere desire to establish a pure morality and a comprehensive altruism as the rule of life that will best further the interests of mankind. Agnosticism itself has assimilated the virtues of Christianity. It is not seeking to discredit the ancient faith as an excuse for living an immoral life; it is simply anxious to supersede Christianity by something better, more reasonable and consonant with natural law,

having his portrait removed from the Police Gallery of distinguished crooks. We are never so fully convinced of the inspiration of the Epistle as when we read the twaddle of Achan of the Modern Mind and then sit down with Peter and ask him what he thinks about it. We can almost imagine we hear him say:

"Read my Second Epistle."

and therefore more generally accepted by educated men. But this modern heathenism will prove as ineffective as the ancient. The only motive weighty enough to sustain men in their struggles against the temptations that address themselves to an animal and selfish nature must come from a sense of relationship to a divine Father, and from trust in the God-Man who has revealed in his own person the true ideal of humanity and in his cross the only saving force that can give peace and inspire purity.—*Western Recorder.*

#### DR. ORR'S ANSWER TO MODERN CRITICISM.

When I am asked, as I sometimes am, which of the articles of the evangelical faith I am prepared to part with at the instance of modern thought and in the interests of a reconstructed theology, I answer, with fullest confidence, "None of them." "Traditional" these articles may be; if they are true, and a part of the unchanging gospel, and if the Church adheres to them as it should, they are bound to be "traditional." This word "traditional" does not alarm me. It is a "traditional" belief that the sun rises and sets, that the tides ebb and flow at regular intervals, that fire burns and water drowns and bread nourishes, that wheat produces wheat and barley barley . . . but we are not going to change our belief in these things simply because they have been long and commonly believed. The old constellations in the heavens are "traditional," but they will be moved from their places as soon as the truths of this old gospel. My ground for the confidence simply is, that they are there in the Bible, and that the world can never do without them. No Church that is to live can afford to drop them from its creed.

## Sir William M. Ramsey's Lectures.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, RICHMOND, VA., OCTOBER 28 TO  
NOVEMBER 4, 1913.

Reported by Rev. V. H. Starbuck, B.D.

### LECTURES 3 AND 4.

About sixteen years ago Prof. Ramsey issued a book in which he set forth the thesis that Luke is invariably accurate. A noted German critic briefly reviewed the book and then demolished it to his own satisfaction with a single question: "What will Prof. Ramsey do with Luke 2:1-3?"

In this passage the critics claimed to find four insuperable difficulties:

(1) Augustus never issued a decree calling for any such census.

(2) No universal census was ever ordered.

(3) There could be no need for every man to go to his own city.

(4) Quirinius was never Governor of Syria in Herod's time.

Sir William, though silenced for the time, at once set to work. Mentally he raised the question, "Is it likely that a historian would invent a series of statements that would be absurd to his readers?" Either there was a process by which the Roman world was subjected to periodic enrollment, or else Luke was simply inviting his readers to make him the object of ridicule. Investigation shows that the period from 15 B. C. to 14 A. D. is seriously slighted by the historians. Much of great importance is not recorded. It is evident, however, that Augustus created a bureaucracy and established a great empire under a carefully developed civil service. Yet the historians say little about this. In this system much depended upon the collection of statistics. Egyptologists have shown that there was a periodic census every fourteen years. Egypt was Caesar's private property and the people were his serfs. They were inferior in education to the people of the senatorial provinces. From documents found in the waste piles of Egypt it appeared that the census system did exist in the time of Augustus and that the second census, at least, extended as far as Palestine. Prof.

Ramsey holds that there is an error in our chronology, and that Christ was born earlier than is generally supposed. As Herod died in the spring of 4 B. C. the birth of Jesus was no later than 5 B. C. Considering that in the slaughter of the innocents Herod took all under two years, our lecturer concludes that the nativity was about 7 B. C. The first census is known to have been in 8 B. C., just about the time of Christ's birth. Clement of Alexandria, about the end of the second century says, "Our Lord was born when first the census was ordered by Augustus." Clement knew there was a census and his statement was not a mere repetition but a corroboration. The passage was never criticized fairly but was roughly handled by its enemies in their desire to get rid of the miraculous.

But why would every man go to his own city? Why must Joseph and Mary go from Nazareth to Bethlehem? Twelve years ago it was thought that this was peculiar to Palestine and a device of Herod. But while it was really Asiatic, it was also found in Egypt as late discoveries show. Augustus made Rome progressive and tried to unite all provinces by free trade with certain limitations. The unity of the empire was a matter of patriotism. Splendid roads were built. Travel was facilitated and made easier than it was as late as 1859. Paul could go from the East to Spain via Rome more satisfactorily than the same trip could be made in the Middle Ages. This shows the real spirit and character of the Roman Empire.

Yet there was a counteracting system unknown till lately. In order to maintain the government they must in some matters fall back on a form of Asiatic despotism. The idea of land tenure was undeveloped. In many cases lands were held and owned by conquering soldiers. This led to two economic difficulties: they needed both capital and labor. Money was loaned by the

heathen temples which acted as banks. A 4th century B. C. inscription found at Sardis tells of soldiers borrowing money in this way. The labor was furnished by the former owners, who shared the returns with the soldiers. In order to assure the labor, laws were enacted, requiring cultivators to remain on the soil. Hence Rome held the principle that under certain circumstances a man must remain at home. As late as the 4th century A. D., Rome held this principle in reserve, e. g., in case of a census or a strike. Every man had a personal attachment to the place of his birth and could always be ordered to return to his home if the government deemed it necessary. In Turkey it is still supposed that a stranger is an enemy; a decent man would be at home. As late as 1883 the fact that a man was twenty miles from home was satisfactory proof that he was a robber. This eastern despotism gradually subdued the Roman Empire till a contractor's attempt to escape from home was regarded as a crime. The progressive Augustus was at times compelled to be despotic. A composite of these two opposing principles of progress and despotism brought about the birth of Christ at Bethlehem according to prophecy.

These general conditions and also the documents declare that Luke could not possibly have invented the idea of the enrollment.

As for Quirinius, he was a soldierly man and hence was selected by Augustus to conduct a war. The date of this war was placed by Momsen two years after Herod's death. Later discoveries pointed to an earlier date. Last year in excavations at Antioch of Pisidia, an inscription was found that proves that Quirinius was conducting this war some time between 11 and 7 B. C. This was confirmed and made absolutely sure by other discoveries including the base of a statue. This early date is admitted by Momsen's successor, Prof. Dessaau, of Berlin.

All these facts were unknown to scholars as late as 1894, and are ignored by the historians of the Augustan Age.

Ancient chronology had no definite system; hence if a date was to be clearly recorded it must be by some such process as

in Luke iii. 1. Until lately, little could be positively settled by these data. But within the last year an inscription has been found at Abila showing that Lysanius was living and governing as tetrarch at about the time here indicated.

It is now absolutely proven that Luke is accurate in all his details with the possible exception of Acts v., 36, 37, which is not verified as yet. Here Gamaliel mentions two insurrections, one of which is not mentioned by Josephus. Yet the latter never intended to mention all of these. But if Gamaliel mentions them in reverse order, as some loudly declare, Luke is responsible only for the report, and the error, if there is any, is not necessarily his, but Gamaliel's.

#### LECTURE 5.

In this and some of the other lectures Professor Ramsey took up several matters of more or less interest, in which he seemed at times to assume the office of exegete rather than archaeologist, and consequently laid himself open to some criticism. "Let a cobbler stick to his last" etc. Much of this is not included in this sketch, largely because it is without the League's scope as lately defined. But two of these cases we will relate in brief.

1. Paul's epistle to the Galatians is the most remarkable of all his letters. He pours out his soul in one long sentence as it were, till he nears the end. But in vi., 10 he takes the pen into his own hand and writes a resume of the whole letter. "Ye see with how large letters etc., Gal. vi., 6-11. The reference is to a fact well known to those familiar with public documents. Publicity was secured by putting up a copy in a conspicuous place and the letters were made in an unusual size. Now this was the emphatic part of this letter and was written in an unusually bold hand. In vs. 17, he says: "From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus". Why does this circumstance justify Paul in demanding acceptance of his teachings? To answer this we must study the meaning of "the marks of the Lord Jesus" *stigmata*. The reference is to marks or scars made on Paul's body by the Gentiles in the cities of Galatia, including the time when

he was stoned and left for dead (Acts xiv., xix.). Paul was a slave (*doulos*) of Jesus Christ (Phil. i., 1). Among the Jews the most trustworthy and affectionate slaves were marked in the ear with a mark of perpetual bondage (Deut. xv., 17). Now in Rome all the most important business was entrusted to slaves. A paid servant was not trustworthy, and a member of the family might neglect business, but a trusted slave—*never!* In Turkish lands, slaves still have marks to indicate their relation to their masters. So Paul writes to the Galatians not only as an Apostle but as a trusted slave of Jesus Christ and as such he must be believed and accredited.

II. Another case is in Acts xxiii. 1. Professor Ramsey claims that here the words, "I have lived in all good conscience," etc., keenly indicate a trace of the Pharisaic in Paul's character. The writer may freely

Benedict Arnold was one of the bravest soldiers of the Revolution; he was wounded several times while leading his men; he had many narrow escapes; he was honored and applauded by Congress and Washington; he was not promoted as he thought he deserved and turned traitor.

Had he been captured he would have been hung as a traitor.

England was ashamed of him; he did not refuse to take command of expeditions into Virginia and Connecticut against his own former comrades, but he sought in vain for permanent employment and position as a soldier. He was used as an illustration in debate in the House of Lords as a traitor to his country and immediately challenged the man who used the language; the Lord accepted, but refused to shoot, even after Arnold had shot.

Arnold once asked a loyal American captain what the United States would do to him if they caught him.

The captain replied: "They would cut off your leg wounded in defense of the flag and bury it with the honors of war; then they would hang the rest of your body on a gibbet as a traitor."

He was as unhappy a man as ever lived.

Arnold, after detected as a traitor did not demand the right to remain in the

say that the suggestion appeared to find no sympathy in the atmosphere of Union Seminary. An institution where it has always been the firm belief that the Bible was written by holy men who were moved by the Holy Spirit, begins to "sit up and take notice" at a suggestion like this, and those who heard were very free in expressing adverse opinions. And yet in this connection Professor Ramsey called attention to a very interesting fact. He claims that Paul was growing in grace (and we have no doubt of it), and that this boastful Pharisaic spirit gradually grew out of him. Consequently the words, meaning *boast*, though they occur 55 times in his epistles, are mainly in the earliest and are not found at all in the latest. Consequently Timothy and Titus are often condemned as un-Pauline.

American army; hold high rank and receive large pay. He was more honorable than those who imitate his treason but refuse to go over to the enemy. They remain in God's army; devote their time, ability and strength to the cause of the enemy; draw pay, and demand recognition as honorable, faithful soldiers. If the Church were an army, and we were in a time of war, they would be hung or shot as traitors.—EDITOR.

#### ERRORS AND OVERSIGHTS.

We have installed in our office a complete up-to-date filing system. All letters from each correspondent with carbon-copies of replies are so placed together and indexed that everything is instantly at hand. A file for errors and requests is a part of the general file. We hope by faithfulness and care to put an end to the errors and oversights always resulting from a large mail and a small office force. A letter to the Editor will always have immediate attention and he will see to it that all troubles are remedied at once.

Thomas Jefferson: "Of all the systems of morality, none appears so pure to me as that of Jesus."

## BIBLE LEAGUE NOTES.

### CHURCH AT DIVIDING OF WAYS

#### MORALS NOT SCHOLARSHIP.

*Rev. Jay Benson Hamilton, D.D., Upholds Authority of Scriptures—Scores Higher Critics..*

"We ought to be on our guard against the inroads on the Old Testament, and more so against those on the person and work of our Lord," said Rev. Jay Benson Hamilton, D.D., of New York, last night to a large audience composed of the Toronto Bible League. He was making a strong plea for the authenticity of the Scriptures, and in doing so scored the higher critics unmercifully. "The highest, strongest, best and oldest scholarship are on the side of the historical trustworthiness and the divine authority of the New Testament," he asserted positively.

"Do not trifle with God's Word or you will get hurt," he continued. "The historical interpretation of the Scriptures is more firmly established than the law of gravity or the Copernican system. Higher criticism has no opponent, but when it becomes hypercritical it can have no friend.

"Criticism in connection with the Scriptures is a misnomer," argued Dr. Hamilton. "A critic must be superior to the Book before he can pass any judgment upon it, and he must be capable of writing a better one. Not one of the discoveries of archaeology has given any strength to the teaching of higher criticism; on the contrary they have given strength to the conservative view of the Old Testament."

#### CHURCHMEN ACCUSED.

After comparing the critics with Celsus, who rejected the miraculous birth of Christ, the speaker said: "We will hear of the documentary theory years after the Germans have quit laughing at it. But now we come to the time when the cry of the infidel is re-echoed by churchmen."

Legal proof of the truth of the Bible was established, he said, and in this connection Judge Simon Greenleaf was quoted from the work, "Examination of the Testimonies of the Evangelists." The judge appealed to the lawyer to give Christian evidence his

earnest study because his profession leads him "to explore the mazes of falsehood, to detect its artifices, to pierce its thickest veils, to follow and expose its sophistries, to compare the statements of different witnesses, to discover truth, and separate it from error.

"Do you believe," cried Dr. Hamilton, "there is a single higher critic who could not be ruled out of court as a false witness? This is no discussion regarding scholarship. We meet scholarship with scholarship. This is an issue of morals, and there can be no dispute with regard to morals. Why should the Church be asked to thresh out these matters after twenty centuries of question and settlement?"

In conclusion, the speaker referred scathingly to ministers, who, being pledged to uphold the Scriptures, yet insidiously attacked their genuineness. "The Christian Church," he said, "has come to the dividing of the ways. The hour has struck for some prophet of God to repeat the challenge of Elijah—"How long halt ye between two opinions?"—*The Evening Telegram, Toronto.*

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### PREACHER ASSAILED HIGHER CRITICS.

REV. J. B. HAMILTON MAKES STRONG PLEA FOR INFALLIBILITY OF SCRIPTURES.

The historic foundation of Scriptures was emphatically asserted last night by Dr. J. Benson Hamilton, D.D. of New York, before the Toronto Bible League, and the contention of the higher critics was strongly assailed. Dr. Hamilton asserted that the highest, strongest and truest scholarship was on the side of the historical worthiness and the Divine authority of the New Testament. The historic interpretation of the Scriptures, he contended, was more firmly established than the law of gravity or the Copernican system. None of the archaeological discoveries had given any strength to the teachings of the higher criticism. On the other hand, they buttressed and held up the conservative view of the Old Testament. What would be thought, he asked, of any one who attempted

ed to assail the Magna Charta or the American Declaration of Independence? It was as reasonable to attack one or the other as it was to attack the Scriptures. There was not a higher critic who could not be ruled out of court as a false witness by their writings of to-day. Why should the Church be asked to thresh out this question after twenty centuries of argument and settlement. He described as false and recreant those ministers who, having taken solemn vows to support the doctrines which they were to teach, sought to discredit those same doctrines.—*The Toronto Daily News.*

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#### THE HIGHER CRITICS RULED OUT OF COURT.

#### STRONG PLEA FOR AUTHENTICITY AND INFALLIBILITY OF SCRIPTURES.

Making a strong plea for the authenticity and infallibility of the Scriptures before the Toronto Bible League last night, Rev. J. Benson Hamilton, D.D., of New York, asserted that the highest, strongest, and truest scholarship was on the side of the historical worthiness and the Divine authority of the New Testament. With all due respect to the many good men who believed otherwise, he said, he and those associated with him believed the opposite. The historical interpretation of the Scriptures was more firmly established than the law of gravity or the Copernican system. None of the archaeological discoveries had given any strength to the teachings of the higher criticism. On the other hand, they buttressed and held up the conservative view held of the Old Testament. The lecturer compared some of the Bible critics of to-day with Celsus, who in his day discredited the Divinity of Christ, and attempted to make a mere man as opposed to the God man. Dealing at some length with this question from a purely legal aspect, the speaker quoted Judge Greenleaf, the eminent American jurist, who showed that there were indubitable proofs of the Divinity of Christ and the historical authenticity of the Gospel. What would be thought of any one who attempted to assail

the Magna Charta or the American Declaration of Independence. It was as reasonable to attack one or the other as it was to attack the Scriptures. There was not a higher critic who could not be ruled out of court as a false witness on their writings of to-day. Christians met scholarship with scholarship, and, the issue being one of morals, there could be no dispute. Why should the Church be asked to thresh out this question after twenty centuries of argument and settlement? Concluding, the lecturer characterized as false and recreant those ministers who, having taken solemn vows to support the doctrines which they were to teach, sought to discredit those same doctrines. —*The Mail and Empire, Toronto.*

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#### SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

*To the Directors and Patrons:*

Dear Friends:

A similar report to this will be given quarterly, hereafter. The purpose is, to keep those who make it possible to continue this work, regularly and fully informed concerning the work. The one thing needed, July 1, 1913, and the only thing possible, was the work of re-organization; by the issuing of the Magazine, winning back those who had lost courage and ceased support; and winning the confidence again of those who still stood by, although almost, if not quite, despairing of success. Thousands of letters have been sent; the CHAMPION has appeared regularly since August 1. It has already spoken for itself. A steady gain in new subscribers and renewal of old subscriptions has marked the six months from the beginning.

The business of the League will be conducted upon the most approved principles and by the best possible methods. All moneys from all sources are entered upon the Treasurer's book to the credit of the League and deposited in the Empire Trust Co. No check can draw out money without being signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the General Secretary, or in his absence, by the President. No moneys can be paid out for any purpose.

save upon a voucher signed by the General Secretary. A weekly statement by the Treasurer is given to the General Secretary of all receipts and all expenditures; a summary of these weekly statements will be presented to the Directors' meetings, to be held monthly; the Directors living nearby will be notified and their presence urgently solicited; those at a distance will be notified and urged to send a letter making suggestions to be read at the meeting by the General Secretary as a part of the business. All absent Directors will receive a record of the business transacted.

We append to this statement the Treasurer's report for the six months, July 1, to January 1.

Respectfully submitted,  
JAY BENSON HAMILTON,  
General Secretary.

#### TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

The form letter below has been sent to all our old subscribers. The blanks have been filled out so as to make it a statement of account. We have credited each with the total number of magazines not received. The sum named, adjusts all past accounts up to January 1, 1915. If there is any error, please inform us immediately. One dollar may seem a small amount, but if each subscriber would remit it in one mail it would seem as if we had struck a gold mine. If all who can do so conveniently will thus aid us, it will lighten very greatly our burden of care. If for any reason immediate payment is an inconvenience, a letter to the Editor will make it all right.

The following statement is being sent to all of our subscribers:

We are deeply gratified at the loyalty of our subscribers. They have nobly stood by us during the stress of these years of illness of our former editor. As we have announced we will make good every number of the magazine, paid for and not received. Our subscription is steadily increasing.

In order that our very small office force may handle the list quickly and accurately,

we desire at the earliest possible moment, to secure a uniform period for beginning and closing the annual subscription.

Your subscription is paid up to

If you will send us we will credit you as paid up to January 1, 1915. If you will secure five of your friends to subscribe, we will credit you until January 1, 1916.

Will you not encourage us by a prompt reply?

Yours cordially,

#### TREASURER'S SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.

JULY 1, 1913 TO DECEMBER 31, 1913.

##### RECEIPTS.

Balance in Bank July 1, 1913	\$ 25 35
Renewal Subscriptions	706 22
New Subscriptions	328 12
Patrons	1,654 50
Literature and Bibliotheca Sacra	147 06
Bible Conferences(subscriptions)	24 65
Bible Conferences(collections)	27 63
	2,913 53

##### DISBURSEMENTS.

General Secretary	.....	\$ 225 00
Treasurer	.....	327 50
Stenographer	.....	850 00
Printing Account	.....	362 30
Old Accounts (Prior to July 1)	....	33 10
Incidental Printing	.....	25 00
Postage	.....	233 64
Stationery	.....	27 09
Office Supplies (including purchase of Typewriter)	.....	72 10
Office Rent	.....	180 00
Telephone	.....	52 38
Janitor's Service	.....	24 00
Freight and Express	.....	25 75
Literature and Bibliotheca Sacra	.....	59 23
Bible Conferences	.....	78 16
Special Transportation	.....	55 50
Sundries (Telegrams, Carfare, Exchange, etc.)	.....	41 62
Cash on hand December 31, 1913		241 16

\$2,913 53

RANDOLPH R. BEAM, Treasurer.

## THE CLUB.

## FIXED LAWS AND MIRACLES.

At present it may be called a general admission that the former contention of the critic, that the laws of nature are unchangeable, and that there can be no violation of them is no longer tenable. Even if it were admitted that nature's laws are unchangeable, no human being can say what the limitations of nature's methods are. For all one can say, they may be limitless enough to allow all the miracles recorded in the Bible to take place.

The late Professor S. P. Langeley, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, of Washington, read a paper before the Philosophical Society of that city, afterwards published in *Science*, in which he ably controverted the opinions held by skeptics, as to miracles, adopting the more recent, advanced and quite orthodox views that "fixed laws" are often far from being fixed, that natural laws are involved in a mystery, perhaps never to be solved, and that what are called natural laws are merely processes observed and that a change of what had been thought to be fixed laws. He says:

"The present generation has begun, if not to be modest or humble, to be somewhat less arrogant in the assumption of its knowledge. We are perhaps beginning to understand, not in a purely poetical sense, but in a very real one, that there may be all around us, in heaven and earth, things beyond measure, of which 'philosophy' not only knows nothing, but has not dreamed.

"As a consequence of this, there is growing to be an unspoken, rather than clearly formulated, admission that we know little of the order of nature, and nothing at all of the 'laws' of nature."

As a matter of fact, there is no end of cases where one law of nature is set aside by the intervention of another. For instance, by natural law ice should sink, because colder than the water beneath. If, however, this was so and if ice should sink, one severe winter would end fish life in lake, pond, river, and to some extent, in the sea also. But by a simple natural

device this law is interfered with so that when water freezes, it floats, instead of sinking, and animal life beneath is protected from death.

By another law, that of gravitation, water falls and seeks a level. But if atmospheric pressure is removed water rises, as in a pump. It also rises by means of capillary attraction, and in a siphon, water can easily pull itself up hill.

One of the most marvellous instances of this interposition of law is the rising of the sap in fruit and other trees. It not only rises, but does so with such force that it pushes out fruit buds and leaf buds sometimes, as in the case of the *Segnoria Gigantia*, several hundred feet from the ground. This force is seen in the tropics where the temperature is comparatively uniform, as well as in northern latitudes, where there is great variation.

The law of gravitation is another instance in point. That law has determined that the natural position of a man shall be to lie prone upon the ground and often gravitation throws him there and invariably does this, and keeps him there when he loses control of himself. But he possesses the power of interposing other forces, overcoming the natural law, and does this every time he stands upright, or walks the earth.

With these and a multitude of other facts to start with, it is clear, as Professor Langeley says, that there are no fixed laws of nature, and that, therefore, any law may be set aside by the intervention of some other law. This being the case, there is no miracle recorded in the Bible that may not pass into the realm of the possible and become probable the moment there are good reason to justify it. Hence the story of the creation of man, the account of the flood, what is said of Jonah and of the incarnation and resurrection of Christ are no longer subjects of ridicule though they are contradictions of what men call the fixed laws of nature. There are few, if any, really thoughtful men who will question the statement that the con-

tention against the possibility of miracles as argued by David Hume has no longer respectable standing, for in large numbers scientists of the present time admit that in the origin of matter, the origin of life, and the origin of the human soul, the supernatural, supernormal, or superphysical must be reckoned with.

And more than this may be said. For even the materialist is unable to offer any rational argument against the evidence surrounding him, that there is something above natural phenomena that is no cipher in the universe, but is a controller of its affairs and therefore is *supernatural*. Lord Kelvin is abundantly supported in the saying that "scientific thought is compelled to accept the idea of a creative power." But this fact of a creative power, this inexplicable and incomprehensible phenomenon, at once, and effectually puts to silence the skeptical assertion that Bible miracles are impossible and improbable because supernatural. The supernatural is here and everywhere; to all of which may be added the words of John Stuart Mill:

"One who sincerely believes in an absolutely good Ruler of the world is not warranted in disbelieving any act ascribed to him, merely because the very small part of its circumstances which we can possibly know does not sufficiently justify it."

PROF. L. T. TOWNSEND.

*To the Editor of The Bible Champion:*

The articles by Professor Townsend on "Is there a Place of Punishment Called Hell?" continue to be of absorbing interest and assume more and more the role of a prophetic message of our times. Indeed, apart from other considerations, equally important in their way, these articles alone amply justify the arrival of THE BIBLE CHAMPION in the forum of public thought.

The timeliness of these articles cannot be questioned. Said a celebrated Fifth Avenue preacher in the hearing of the writer: "I never preach Hell. Like the wealthy woman, who in her labors among the poor would wear white kid gloves, so that the stain from dirty hands might administer rebuke in silence, so I

hold up the purity of holiness which is itself the rebuke of unholiness."

The timeliness of these articles is evidenced again by the utterances of a noted theologian of one of our Divinity schools in Massachusetts, on page 8 of "Question Box Talks" No 2, printed by "The Outlook." "As a noted instance of the constant progress of theology," this professor cites, "the general change of mind regarding future punishment" . . . "Punishment, indeed," he continues: "remains both inevitable and everlasting; but its endurance is bound up, not with the unending pain of any individual, but with the necessary consequences of sin. Whenever there is sin, to all eternity there will be punishment; but that this divine remedy should be forever ineffective, that the will and love of God should be forever defeated, becomes unthinkable. This makes future punishment a 'divine remedy.'" As a remedy in this life, punishment operates in two ways. Said Cain: "My punishment is greater than I can bear." But we do not read of his turning to God for forgiveness. The Psalmist confessed: "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now do I keep thy law." These two types of experience have always kept pace with one another in this world's life. And what indication have we from which to infer that punishment as a remedy will operate differently in the life of the world to come? But apart from this, where does the noted professor and author obtain the idea that future punishment is remedial? The Scriptures say: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still . . . He that is righteous, let him be righteous still." Along the line of taking future punishment as a remedy we quite appreciate that the idea that "the will and love of God should be forever defeated becomes unthinkable." But this changes when we bow before the Divine dictum: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my good pleasure."

Continues the professor: "This change of mind" . . . regarding future punishment . . . "has been brought about largely by the application to theology of the supreme, determining doctrine of the fatherhood of God. That is our test of truth. Nothing is true which contradicts

it." And we ask: can the doctrine of the fatherhood of God be made to modify the meaning of the repeated pronouncements of all Holy Scripture regarding the duration of future punishment? Does not this make of Scripture 'a house divided against itself'? Moreover is it fair to make the doctrine of the fatherhood of God the final, the exclusive 'test of truth'? That God our Father is, is truly a very wonderful revelation. But all revelation is limitation. When God reveals himself in all his glorious works, there is yet much more of God himself that remains unrevealed. When to this self-revelation in creation God adds the revelation of himself in Jesus Christ, even then there still remain in God infinite realms of unrevealed glories. Revelation is limitation. Of necessity it must be this. All fellowship between the Infinite and the finite is at the expense of limitation of the Infinite. Even the self-revelation of His fatherhood is not the whole revelation of Himself. God's fatherhood is much. But oh, His Godhood is more. Making the fatherhood of God the final, the exclusive test of truth, raises a partial revelation of God to the heights of the entire revelation of God. And that can not be done. Nothing short of the 'supreme, determining doctrine' of the whole Godhood of God can be our test of truth. Nothing is true which contradicts God. Might our esteemed professor mold the thought of our coming preachers along the grander lines of the Old and New Testament prophetic and apostolic visions of God.

Let me end as I began, by thanking Professor Townsend for his able and widely appreciated work, and **THE BIBLE CHAMPION** for having entered upon what promises a noble career of witness for Christ and the Church.

JOHN H. DE VRIES.

Saybrook, Conn.

#### THE OBSCURED CROSS.

*Editors of The Presbyterian:*

In the December number of the **BIBLE CHAMPION** (formerly the *Bible Student*), there is an article of such absorbing interest, that your correspondent has selected portions, in order that *The Presbyterian* may republish these for such readers as

may not be subscribers to that helpful religious monthly.

It is one of the mysteries of this present age, that men permit themselves to be ordained, ministers of the Gospel and our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and immediately begin to peck, with their little hammers, at the foundations of truth. Such men, with the spirit of antichrist, trample on the cross, and count the blood of the covenant an unclean thing. Such are not smitten, as was Uzziah, when he laid unsanctified hands on the Ark of the Old Testament Covenant; but their followers, and the onlookers, suffer an atrophy of Christian conscience, which, if not so sudden, is no less fatal.

*The Presbyterian*, Feb. 11, 1914.

A very generous quotation was given from "The Obscured Cross" by Dr. Binney Simpson Black, of Toronto, Can.

#### A HEARTENING TESTIMONY.

Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D., says: "I am just now returned from what, practically, has been a four years' absence from my native land. And out of this unique opportunity for reaching a just estimate I can say faithfully that all over the world the men who are holding the crowds, the men whose labors are being signally crowned with success, the men who above all others are listened to and followed, are the men who stand four square on the Bible as the authoritative word of the living God, and who are preaching the unimpeachable divinity of Jesus Christ as Son, Savior and Lord." The liberal and the radical may get considerable notoriety, but it is the man who holds firmly to the old paths that does the constructive work of the age. This fact ought to encourage all timid souls, who have been fearful that the ark of the Lord would fail, because some have been clamorously speaking to undermine its foundations. "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure.—*Exchange*.

Francis Bacon: "There never was found, in any age of the world, either religion or law that did so highly exalt the public good as the Bible."

Benjamin Rush: "The Bible contains more knowledge necessary to man in his present state than any other book in the world."

## EDITOR'S WHAT NOT.

### REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM.

Hume's Essay on Miracles has been answered in every way imaginable, we believe, but two. We have supplied those for the readers of the CHAMPION.

Judge Francis J. Lamb, author of *Miracle and Science*, has summarily haled the infidel outlaw to court and placed him on trial. Debate and trial are very different processes. The criminal is tried on evidence under oath. He cannot offer opinions, guesses, or inventions, as facts. One false statement makes all he says false. The books of the Bible being a testimony, their contents a deposition, the only way to overthrow them is by better, more competent, *contemporary* testimony.

The trial was held in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*. A reprint of the case in a Bible League Tract was furnished to the CHAMPION. Our readers can have a copy, postpaid, for five cents, as long as the supply lasts.

The other method of reply may be found in the *Arena*. Hume's Essay is arrant nonsense. It is a prolix, lumbering absurdity. The author poses as a philosopher; he would be the first to demand that philosophic truth should be philosophically discerned. He had as fellow-conspirators against the Word of God, scientists, who would strenuously demand that scientific truth should be scientifically discerned. Philosopher and scientists, with pompous effrontery denied to the Science of Religion that which they demanded as a fundamental principle in their own domain. They contemptuously scouted the maxim that "spiritual things must be spiritually discerned." Christian thinkers have been cowed into surrendering their most effective weapon and have allowed the foe to dictate all the conditions of the combat. Little wonder that infidelity has published to the world for so many years an utter rout of the defenders of the Bible. We decided to select the field and the method for ourselves. We have tried to help fulfil the prediction, "He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief

shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate." (Psa. vii. 16.)

We find it necessary to confess at the beginning that our rendering of Hume is a burlesque, to save apology later. It is a hoax fashioned after the pattern of the Counterfeit Critics. We invite our readers to study our copy and discover if they can the joints between Hume and Hamilton. Had we cared to play the whole critical game, and seriously pretend to have discovered an original germ, in defense of the supernatural, which had been mutilated after the death of the author by an infidel *confrere*, we could have materially strengthened the case by two additions. The author was a scholar, and could not plead ignorance of the fundamental principle in all discussion, "Know what you are talking about." Yet he confessed to the Bishop of Durham that he had never read the New Testament with attention. His assumption of ability to discuss, refute, and overthrow the Holy Scriptures, of which he was utterly ignorant, was not merely childish folly, but unblushing impudence. A child in knickerbockers with a bean-blower bombarding Gibraltar must have been the high ideal toward which the mighty warrior strove.

A conscience that could suffer no qualms of remorse for sinning against the light of Christian civilization that had made him an educated man instead of a naked savage; that could deny and deride the Son of God who had died to give him the blessings and advantages of the life he enjoyed; that could so far forget the principles of Anglo-Saxon manliness and fair play as to pose as an authority and speak *ex cathedra* upon matters concerning which he was totally ignorant, and lead astray thousands of his ignorant, trusting fellows; might well utter at the last the heart-breaking lamentation accredited to him:

"I seem affrighted and confounded with the solitude in which I am placed by my philosophy. When I look abroad, on every side I see dispute, contradiction and dis-



*And having done all, to stand. Ephes. vi. 13.*

traction. When I turn my eye inward, I find nothing but doubt and ignorance. Where am I? or what am I? From what cause do I derive my existence? To what condition shall I return? I am confounded with questions. I begin to fancy myself in a very deplorable condition, environed with darkness on every side."

We betray our cause when we permit the infidel to strut and exploit his nonsense in broad daylight, and for politeness' sake conceal his whines, his wails, his agonizing despair in the dark. Our best argument is the frenzy of fear which the advocates of disbelief exhibit just as they take their leap into the midnight darkness of a hopeless death.

#### NO FIELD AGENTS.

We have had numerous applications for appointment as Field Agents for The Bible League. We have replied to all, that at present we desire none. Our campaign will be confined to the one task of pushing THE BIBLE CHAMPION. When a sufficient number of subscribers are secured in any state or city, each being a member of the Bible League, they will be consulted as to what are the best and wisest plans for propagating the work. If our readers are aware of any one claiming authority to represent the Bible League, they may know no such authority has been given. We will be glad to know of such cases, if any. The one exception to the above is Rev. John A. Gordon, D.D.,

# The March Champion

## A Miracle Number

Readers who will send a postal card will receive ten or more copies of a One Page Leaflet with this heading and the Table of Contents for March; we would like to distribute 10,000 to Ministers and Lawyers; will you help? Address Jay Benson Hamilton, D.D., Editor.

of Los Angeles, Cal. He has earned the gratitude of all friends of the Bible League by a labor of love that has spared neither effort nor personal funds. Owing entirely to him, the California League is our strongest and most efficient League, numbering several hundred. By a concerted movement between Dr. Gordon and the Editor we hope to bring this membership to one thousand in a short time.

#### THE BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

*The Bibliotheca Sacra* is to be congratulated upon its long and brilliant career. It has no superior in the character of the subjects treated, and for the intellectual ability and literary rank of its contributors. The Editor, G. Frederick Wright, LL.D., alone is enough to make the Quarterly one of the foremost leaders of the world in the realm which has commanded the interest and labor of his whole life. THE BIBLE CHAMPION is not only highly honored, but greatly favored in name and under the direction of its new Board of Directors in being associated with *The Bibliotheca Sacra*. All new subscribers to *The Bibliotheca Sacra* may secure both Magazines for one year for \$2.50. This should be paid in advance and sent to THE BIBLE CHAMPION.

THE CHAMPION bows to the blizzard, and begs the pardon of its readers for being late. The delay was an act of God. "He hath done all things well."